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Emily Lullaby
1888

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1902

1902

THE
DESULTORY MAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RICHELIEU," "DARNLEY," "DE L'ORME," "PHILIP AUGUSTUS,"
"HENRY MASTERTON," "MARY OF BURGUNDY,"
"JOHN MARSTON HALL," "THE GIPSY,"
AND "ONE IN A THOUSAND."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1836.

1911

THE
DESULTORY MAN.

LA BREDE.

Tutta fra se di se stessa invaghita.

Bernardo l'Unico.

WHAT the world are accustomed to consider as great and brilliant actions, have very often their origin in pride or ostentation, while home virtues, and less obtrusive qualities, though their motive does not admit of doubt, and their nature is mixed with no evil, are scarcely ranked in the catalogue of good deeds, and even if known are rarely appreciated. The rich man who spends a part of his fortune and bestows a portion of his time on public charities, claims unanimous applause as his just reward, and mankind are willing to grant it without any investigation, either of his actions or their incitements; but the man who, without possessing any wealth to give, delights to see every one cheerful and happy around him, and finds his pleasure in his fellow-creature's peace, receives but small gratitude, and meets with little admiration.

For my own part, I am thankful to every one who gives me happy moments. There was a little circle at Bordeaux, in which I have spent some of the most pleasant hours of my existence. The follies and vices, the turmoil and discontent, of a large city never set foot there. It was composed of a few, that could feel and enjoy all that was beautiful in art or nature, whose native resources were equal to their own contentment, and who, without shunning, required nothing from the world. Time passed not slowly with them; music, and reading, and conversation succeeded, each borrowing a charm from the other, and linking themselves together; so that the evenings flew insensibly; and the hour of our

separation always arrived before we were aware of its approach.

In the mornings, we often left the town and spent the day in the most beautiful parts of the environs ; and the scenery was always sure to suggest some new idea, which again called forth a thousand more, and every one, happy themselves, endeavoured to add to the happiness of others. It was in one of these expeditions that we went to visit the little town and château of La Brède, once the residence of the famous Montesquieu. The house is a true old French *château*, with its turrets, and drawbridges, and garden within the ditch, and loopholes for firing through the walls, and all the little *et ceteras*, which carry one's mind back to ancient days ; but the devil, or some spirit hostile to antiquity, has put it into the proprietor's head to whitewash the towers of La Brède ; and there they were, hard at it, trying to metamorphose the old mansion of Montesquieu into the likeness of a cockney cottage on the Hampstead road.

The owner was absent, but we were admitted immediately, and taken, in the first place, into the apartment where Montesquieu had composed his *Esprit des Lois*. A little more reverence for old times had been shown here ; the room was exactly in the state he left it when he died ; there was his armchair, and all the rest of the old damask furniture, spotted and stained in a truly classical manner ; and there was the hole the sage had worn in the marble by resting his foot with mathematical precision always on one spot. We saw it all—all, which is nothing in itself, but something in its associations. We were then taken through the house, which appeared a large rambling kind of building ; but, to tell the truth, I do not recollect much about it, except one large hall of very vast dimensions, where lay an old helmet, which something tempted me to put upon my head, and which I once thought must have remained there for ever, for, as if to punish me for the whim, during some time I could get it off by no manner of means. I have said that I remember little about the house ; the reason was this—I was thinking more at the time of the woman who showed it to us than of anything else in it—ay, or of Montesquieu into the bargain. Now there may be many people who would judge from this confession, that she was some pretty *soubrette*, whose beauty had taken my imagination by the ear.

But no such thing; not that I am not fond of beauty in every shape, but the case was different in the present instance. What or who she was I do not know; but if Dame Fortune had placed her in any other situation than that of a lady, the jade of a goddess ought to be put in the pillory for a cheat and an impostor. Her dress was of that dubious description which gave no information; but her manners—her air—her look—told a great deal. She was grave without being sad. It was a sort of gentle gravity, that seemed to proceed more from a calm, even disposition, than from any grief or sorrow; and when she smiled, there was a ray of pure, warm light came beaming from her eyes, and said that there was much unextinguished within. They were as fine eyes, too, as I ever beheld. Yet she was not handsome; though, if I were to go on with the description, perhaps I should make her out a perfect beauty, for I saw nothing but the expression, and that was beautiful. I could draw her character, I am sure, and would not be mistaken in a single line; for her voice was exactly like her eyes, and when the two go together one cannot be deceived; there was a mild elegance in it that was never harsh, though sometimes it rose a little, and sometimes fell, and gave more melody to the French tongue than ever I had heard before.

Now, reader, for aught I know, you may be as arrant a fool as ever God put breath into—for I hope and trust this book will be read not by the wise part of mankind only—should that be the case, Lord have mercy upon the publisher. But do not be offended. You may, (under the same restrictive “for aught I know,”) be as wise as King Solomon or wiser; but, whatever be your portion of wit, you will have seen, in all probability, long before now, that there was something in this girl that interested me not a little. What that was can be nothing to you, for it proceeded from private feelings and private recollections, which you would make nothing of if you knew them this minute.

However, there was a question which none of us could decide: was she one of the family of the château or was she not, and how were we to bestow the little donation usually given to the servants under such circumstances? However, the elder lady of the party took it upon herself; and while I was standing in the garden where Montesquieu used to work with his own hands,

figuring to myself the philosopher of the laws, digging away in his full nightcap and variegated dressing gown, she put the money into the hands of her companion, begging that she would give it to the servants. The other looked at her with a smile which might have been translated half a dozen ways. It might have been, "I am a servant myself"—it might have been, "I see your embarrassment." But, however, she said that she would give it to them, and bidding her adieu, we proceeded to the carriage. We had scarcely all got in, when she came tripping over the drawbridge, with a bouquet of flowers in her hand. She gave them with one of those same bright smiles, saying, that perhaps we might like to have "*Quelques fleurs du jardin de Montesquieu.*" We took them thankfully, and she re-entered the house, leaving us more than ever in doubt.

THE CHATEAU DE BLANCFORD.

Quant' è bella giovenezza
Che si fugge tutta via
Che vuol esser lieto, sia
Di doman non c'è certezza.
Triumpho de Bacco.

THERE is scarcely any character in the range of history, which I am so much led to admire as that of Edward the Black Prince. Combining all the brightest qualities of a hero and a man, his glorious actions and his early death, all give him a title to our interest and admiration. One of the last excursions which we made with the friends I have just mentioned was to a little town called Blancford. It lies, as it were, behind Bordeaux, upon an eminence which commands all the country round, with a far view over the plains of Medoc, and the bend of the Garonne lying at your feet. In a valley, at a short distance, stand the walls of an old castle, in which the Black Prince is said to have passed some of the last hours of his existence; and this was the real object of our pilgrimage.

Having ordered dinner, and left the carriage at Blancford, we wandered down, through some beautiful lanes, all breaking forth into the first blossoms of spring, to the ruins of the old château, which affords a sad picture of the decay of human works. The walls, built to resist armies, had crumbled to nothing before the power of Time. We nevertheless amused ourselves for more than an hour, climbing among the old ivy-grown remains, and fancying the various beings that, from time to time, had tenanted that spot now so desolate. It was all imagination, it is true, but 'tis one of the greatest arts in life, thus to give food to fancy and to supply her with materials from the past. It is less dangerous than borrowing from the future. I forget whether it is Lord Kaimes, or Allison, or who, that accounts for the pleasure we feel in the sublime and beautiful, principally from the exercise of the mind in new combinations. I feel that there is some truth in it; for when I can let my ima-

gination soar without restraint, I try to separate myself, as it were, from her, and view her as I would a lark, rising and singing in the sky, and enjoy her very wanderings.

So much amusement did we derive from our speculations that we lingered there long. A variety of shrubs and foliage had decorated the old ruin in a fantastic manner; and as we descended into one of the dungeons, where probably many a captive had told his solitary hours, a free, wild bird started out, at our approach, and took its flight into the unconfined air. On the highest pinnacles of the walls, where the hand of man could never reach, Nature has sown little groups of wild pinks, that hung bending in the wind, as if to tempt one to take them. I endeavoured in vain to obtain some of them for one of the ladies of the party, between whom and my friend B— feelings were growing up which ended in much happiness at an after period. To punish my awkwardness, they called upon me to write a ballad on the subject. I did my best to comply, for we all strove to bring our little share of amusement into the common stock, and I felt myself more peculiarly bound to contribute, as I believed in my heart that many of these amusements, and especially that of whiling away the evening with little tales and sketches, had been devised for the purpose of turning my mind from every painful thought. These contributions gradually accumulated into a short miscellany, which, as it comes decidedly into the recollections of this year, I will give, as far as my memory serves, and call it "Scraps."

We left the old castle with a feeling of regret. We had had time to establish a kind of friendship with it, and did not like to quit it. After dinner we wandered on to the brow of the hill, and sitting down, watched the landscape as the closing evening varied all its hues. It had been a fine clear day: no pain had reached us ourselves, and no storm had come across the sky—all had been bright and unshadowed. The last moments of such a day are precious—for who can say what tomorrow will bring forth?—and all feeling it alike, we lingered on till the edge of the sun touched the horizon, and then returned to the busy haunts of man.

SCRAPS.—NO. I.

THE LADY AND THE FLOWER.

THESE be of British arms and deeds
Who sing in noble strain,
Of Poitiers' field, and Agincourt,
And Cressy's bloody plain.

High tales of merry England,
Full often have been told,
For never wanted bard to sing
The actions of the bold.

But now I tune another string,
To try my minstrel power,
My story of a gallant knight,
A lady, and a flower.

The noble sun that shines on all,
The little or the great,
As bright on cottage doorway small,
As on the castle gate,

Came pouring over fair Guienne
From the far eastern sea;
And glisten'd on the broad Garonne,
And slept on Blancford lea.

The morn was up, the morn was bright,
In southern summer's rays,
And nature caroll'd in the light,
And sung her Maker's praise.

Fair Blancford! thou art always fair,
With many a shady dell,
And bland variety and change
Of forest and of fell.

But Blancford on that morn was gay
With many a pennant bright,
And glittering arms and panoply
Shone in the morning light.

For good Prince Edward, England's pride,
Now lay in Blancford's towers,
And weary sickness had consumed
The hero's winter hours

THE DESULTORY MAN.

But now that brighter beams had come
With Summer's brighter ray,
He called his gallant knights around
To spend a festal day.

With tournament and revelry,
To pass away the hours,
And win fair Mary from her sire
The lord of Blancford's towers.

But why fair Mary's brow was sad
None in the castle knew,
Nor why she watch'd one garden bed,
Where none but wild pinks grew.

Some said that seven nights before
A page had sped away,
To where Lord Clifford, with his power,
On Touraine's frontier lay.

To Blancford no Lord Clifford came,
And many a tale was told,
For well 'twas known that he had sought
Fair Mary's love of old.

And some there said, Lord Clifford's love
Had cool'd at Mary's pride,
And some there said, that other vows
His heart inconstant tied.

Foul slander, ready still to soil
All that is bright and fair,
With more than Time's destructiveness,
Who never learn'd to spare!

The morn was bright, but posts had come
Bringing no tidings fair,
For knit was Edward's royal brow,
And full of thoughtful care.

The lists were set; the parted sun
Shone equal on the plain,
And many a knight there manfully
Strove fresh applause to gain.

Good Lord James Talbot, and Sir Guy
Of Brackenbury, he
Who slew the giant Iron Arm
On Cressy's famous lea,

Were counted best; and pray'd the prince
To give the sign that they
Might run a course, and one receive
The honours of the day.

"Speed, knights! perhaps those arms that shine
In peace," Prince Edward said,
"Before a sennight pass, may well
In Gallic blood be died.

"For here we learn that hostile bands
Have gathered in Touraine,
And Clifford with his little troop
Are prisoners, or slain.

"For with five hundred spears, how bold
Soe'er his courage show,
He never could withstand the shock
Of such a host of foe."

Fair Mary spoke not; but the blood
Fled truant from her cheek,
And left it pale as when day leaves
Some mountain's snowy peak.

But then there came the cry of horse,
The east lea pricking o'er;
And to the lists a weary page
A tatter'd pennant bore.

Fast came a knight with blood-stain'd arms
And dusty panoply,
And beaver down, and armed lance,
In chivalric array.

No crest, no arms, no gay device
Upon his shield he wore,
But a small knot beside his plume
Of plain wild pinks he bore.

For love, for love and chivalry
Lord Clifford rides the plain!
And foul lies he who dares to say
His honour e'er knew stain!

And Mary's cheek was blushing bright,
And Mary's heart beat high,
And Mary's breath, that fear oppress'd,
Came in a long glad sigh.

Straight to the prince the knight he rode,
"I claim these lists," he cried;
"Though late unto the field I come
My suit be not denied.

"For we have fought beside the Loire,
And died our arms in blood,
Nor ever ceased to wield the sword
So long as rebels stood.

THE DESULTORY MAN.

"Hemm'd in, I one time never thought
To die in British land,
Nor see my noble prince again,
Nor kiss his royal hand.

"But well fought every gallant squire,
And well fought every knight,
And rebels have been taught to feel
The force of British might.

"And now in humble tone they sue,
To know thy high command,
And here stand I these lists to claim,
For a fair lady's hand.

"For Mary's love and chivalry
I dare the world to fight ;
And foul and bitterly he lies
Who dares deny my right !"

"No, no, brave Clifford," Edward said,
"No lists to-day for thee,
Thy gallant deeds beside the Loire
Well prove thy chivalry.

"Sir Guy, Sir Henry, and the rest,
Have well acquit their arms,
But Edward's thanks are Clifford's due,
As well as Mary's charms.

"My lord, you are her sire," he said,
"Give kind consent and free,
And who denies our Clifford's right
Shall ride a tilt with me."

Gay spake the prince, gay laugh'd the throng,
And Mary said not nay,
And bright with smile, and dance, and song,
Went down the festal day.

And when Lord Clifford to the board
Led down his Mary fair,
A knot of pinks was in his cap,
A knot was in her hair.

For it had been their sign of love,
And loved by them was still,
Till death came gently on their heads,
And bowed them to his will.

And now though years have pass'd away,
And all that years have seen,
And Clifford's deeds and Mary's charms
Are as they ne'er had been,

Some wind, as if in memory,
Has borne the seeds on high,
To deck the ruin's crumbling walls
And catch the passing eye.

They tell a tale to those who hear,
For beauty, strength, and power,
Are but the idleness of a day,
More shortlived than a flower.

Joy on, joy on, then, while ye may,
Nor waste the moments dear,
Nor give yourselves a cause to sigh,
Nor teach to shed a tear.

SCRAPS.—NO. II.

LINES TO A WITHERED ROSE.

I CAST thee from me, poor child of a day,
Like the lost heart that bore thee now wither'd and dead,
To open no more in the sunshiny ray,
Thy fragrance exhausted, thy loveliness fled.

'Tis the bright and the happy, the fresh and the gay,
Alone that are fitted to haunt in man's sight,
When wither'd, far better to cast them away,
Than to mock their dull hues with the glitter of light.

No culture can ever restore thee thy bloom,
Or waken thy odour, or raise up thy head,
The wretch's last refuge, the dust and the tomb,
Is all I can give, now thy sweetness has fled.

Oh who would live on, when life's brightness is past,
When the heart has lost all that once bade it beat high?
When hopes still prove false, and when joys never last,
'Tis better to wither—'tis better to die.

I cast thee from me—away to the earth,
More happy than others that must not depart,
Doom'd to bear on their grief 'neath the semblance of mirth
With silence of feeling, and deadness of heart.

SCRAPS.—NO. III.

DESULTORY CONVERSATIONS WITH THE
MAN IN THE MOON.

BY A TRAVELLED GENTLEMAN.

I HAVE wandered almost all over the face of this globe, which, notwithstanding everything that geographers have said upon the subject, appears to me to be nothing more or less than a great melon; and I am much mistaken, if, when Parry gets to what we call the North Pole, he does not find it to be only a stalk.* But, as I was saying, I have wandered almost all over it, and in so doing, I have met with a great many extraordinary characters, but with perhaps none more singular than the person with whom I held the conversations which follow.

Now, though I do not suppose anybody will have the hardihood to doubt my having had what Sterne calls an affair with the moon, in which, as he justly observes, there is neither sin nor shame, yet, for the gratification of the present society, I am very willing to explain how I first became acquainted with the gentleman from whom I have since derived so much moonlight and information.

I remember one day when I was at Shiras, I had been out into the vakeel's garden, drawling away my time as is usual with me, and finding myself tired, I went into the tomb of Hafiz, squatted myself down in a corner, and began stroking my beard slowly with my right hand like a pious Mussulman. Several Persians came in while I was thus employed, and seemed wonderfully edified by my piety and solemnity, and after they were gone I fell fast asleep.

I always make a point of dreaming; indeed, I should think I lost one half of my existence if I did not. During our dreams is perhaps the only portion of our being that we live without doing any harm to ourselves or anything else.

* This was written before the discoveries of Sir John Ross.

That evening I jumbled a great many odd things in my head, and whether it was the influence of Hafiz's tomb or what, matters little, but I became critical in my sleep. I quarrelled with my old friend Shakspeare—I found out all his anachronisms. "How the mischief, sir," said I, "could you be such a fool as to make the Delphic oracle exist at the same time with Julio Romano in the Winter's Tale?" Shakspeare hung his head. "And, besides," I continued, "having written many a stiff sentence, which neither you yourself nor any one else understands, you have stolen, most abominably stolen, from Saadi. 'And the poor beetle that we tread upon,' &c., is absolutely the same as that passage in which he says, 'Life is sweet and delightful to all who possess it, and the ant feels as much as the hero in dying.' Billy, Billy! I am afraid you have not taken enough pains to correct your sad propensity to deerstealing."

"My dear sir," answered Shakspeare, mildly, laying his hand upon the sleeve of my vest, "I never heard of Saadi in all my life; and let me assure you, that it is perfectly possible for two authors to think alike, ay, and write very much alike too, without at all copying from each other."

"But the reviewers don't think so," said I.

"There were no reviewers in my day," answered Shakspeare. "I have been plagued enough with commentators, Heaven knows! but with reviewers, thank God, I have had nothing to do. Why, my dear sir, I should have died under the operation."

Shakspeare was going on, but the last call to evening prayer, which a bell-mouthed muezzinn was bellowing from a neighbouring minaret, put a stop to his oratory by awakening me from my dream.

It was a beautiful evening; the sun was just going down over far Arabia, the sky was purpled by the last rays of his departing splendour, the evening breath of the rose pervaded all the air, and the ear of Heaven was filled with the reposing hum of creation. I offered up my prayers with the rest, and then stood gazing at the great orb of light as he sank to his magnificent repose.

The moment that the last bright spot of his disk had disappeared, the Eastern world was all darkness. No soft twilight in that climate soothes the transition from the warm light of day to the depth of night; but, to compensate, the stars shine more brightly, and come quicker

upon the track of day, and in a moment a thousand beaming lights broke out in the heaven, as if they were jealous that the sun had shone so long; while on the earth, too, the fireflies kept hovering about as if the sky "rained its lesser stars upon our globe."

Men have strange presentiments sometimes, and we have a great many great instances of them in a great many great men. Now whether it was a presentiment that I should meet the Man in the Moon that evening, which made me linger out of the city, I cannot tell at this interval of time. But so it was that I did linger, and got wandering about down in the valley till the moon rose clear and mild, and weaving her silver beams with the dark blue of the sky, it became all one tissue of gentle light. Just at that moment, on a bank where the moonbeams appeared all gathered together, I saw a little old man with a dog by his side and a lantern in his hand—take him altogether, not at all unlike Diogenes.

Wherever I go I adopt the country that I happen to be in, lest at a pinch it should have nothing to say to me, not as most men do, by halves, growling like a bear all the time they do it; no, but altogether, as a man does a wife, for better, for worse—laws, manners, superstitions, and prejudices. Now, had I followed this excellent custom in the present instance, I ought, in Persia, to have imagined my old man to be a *goule instantier*, or, at best, a *siltrim*; but somehow forgetting a few thousand years, I could not get his likeness to Diogenes out of my head, and walking up to him, I asked him if he were looking for an honest man, adding, that if he were, I should be happy to help him, for that I wanted one too.

"No," said the old man, "I am looking for sticks."

"Sticks!" echoed I; "you will find none on this side of the valley—you must cross the stream, and among those bushes you will find sticks enough."

"But I cannot go out of the moonshine," said the old man.

I now began to smoke him, (as the vulgar have it.)

"Ho, ho!" said I, "you are the Man in the Moon, I take it!"

"At your service," said my companion, making me a low bow.

"Well, then," I continued, "I will go and gather you a fagot, and afterward we will have some chat to—"

gether, and you shall tell me something about your habitation up there, for I have often wished to know all that is going on in it."

The Man in the Moon seemed very well pleased with the proposal. The sticks were soon gathered, and sitting on the bank together, he set the lantern down beside him, whistled to his dog, which was one of those little, black, round-limbed, short-tailed curs, which seem of no earthly use but to bark at our horses' heels, and then entered into conversation without further ceremony. Indeed, ever after, in the many conversations which I have had with him, and which perhaps the malicious may term fits of lunacy, I have had reason to think of him as I did at first—namely, that he was a very shrewd, chatty old gentleman, not at all slack in showing any knowledge he possessed, and who, if he had not read much, had at least seen a good deal.

CONVERSATION I.—PERSIA.

"Sages and philosophers," said the Man in the Moon, "always show the certainty of what they advance by the discrepancy of their opinions. You must have remarked, my dear young friend—"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted I, "it is rather an odd appellation to bestow upon a man of my standing, who have more white hairs in my head than black ones."

The Man in the Moon burst out laughing, with such a clear, shrill, moonlike laugh, that he made my ears ring. "Why, you are but a boy," said he, "in comparison to me, when you consider all the centuries that I have been rolling round and round this globe. But listen to me. You must have remarked that no two wise men ever were known to think alike upon the same subject, while the gross multitude generally contrive to coincide in opinion, and right or wrong, don't trouble their brains about it. Now, while in every age different theories have been formed among the learned respecting the moon and its structure, the vulgar have uniformly come to the same conclusion—namely, that it is made of cream cheese."

"But, my dear sir," cried I, "remember that science, very often, like a part of algebra, sets out with a false

position, the error of which being subsequently discovered and corrected, leads to a just conclusion."

"As you say," replied the Man in the Moon, "philosophy is little better than a concatenation of errors."

"I did not say any such thing," interrupted I.

"Well, well, don't be so warm," he continued; "I am not going to discuss the point. I will now tell you what it really is, which is better than all theory. The common classes have not judged with their usual sagacity about the moon, which is not, in fact, made of cream cheese, nor, indeed, as Mr. Wordsworth obscurely hints, in his profound old poem of 'Peter Bell,' has it any similarity to a little boat, except that of carrying me about in it. Nor is it a crepitation from the sun, nor a windfall from the earth, which has gone on in *statu quo* ever since Galileo took the business out of the sun's hands by crying out, *E pur se mouve*. As to all that Ariosto said upon the subject, that is a pure fudge. No, sir, the moon is—but I must tell you that another time, for I see that I must be gone!" So saying, he snatched up his lantern, laid his fagot on his shoulder, and called to his dog, who appeared to have a mortal aversion to the excursion, for no sooner did he perceive his master's intentions than he clapped his tail between his legs, and ran away howling.

"Truth! Truth!" cried the Man in the Moon to his dog. "I call him Truth, sir, for he is very difficult to be caught hold of," said the old man, when he had got him; and now, having tied him by a string, he wished me good-by, and began walking up a moonbeam which soon conducted him out of sight.

SCRAPS.—NO. IV.

A YOUNG LADY'S STORY.

It was somewhere in Italy—the precise spot matters but little; one might fix it anywhere, from the Milanese to Calabria, though in all probability it was some place in the southern part of that beautiful land which has met the fate that so often follows loveliness—ruin even for its charms.

It was the close of a burning day about the middle of September; there had been a sort of feverish heat in the air during the whole morning, which, as the evening came on, settled down into an oppressive sultriness, that impeded respiration, and rendered the whole world languid and inactive. All was still, but it was not the stillness of repose. No animal enlivened the scene, but where a heavy crow took its long, slow flight across the sky, or a straggling firefly gave a dull and fitful gleam among the dank vapours that came reeking up from the flat marshy fields on either side of the road.

A solitary traveller rode along towards the dark wood before him, and ever and anon seemed to turn his eyes towards the edge of the horizon, where enormous masses of deep black clouds appeared to swallow up the setting sun. From time to time the roll of distant thunder announced the coming storm; and as darkness grew over the face of the earth quick flashes of lightning started like genii of fire from the gloom, and shed a livid horror on the scene. The traveller hurried on dismayed, while torrents of rain began to drench the bosom of nature; but, strange to say, and unaccountable, he never once thought of returning to the inn where he had spent the day, and which was not half a league behind. However, as storms, like all other uncomfortable things, are rarely of eternal duration, the one in question began to subside. The rain ceased, and the traveller went on at an easy pace, hoping every moment to find some hospitable shed where he might dry his clothes and wait out the rest of the tempest.

The road at length turned off abruptly to the right,

and narrowing insensibly, assumed the appearance of a winding lane, at the end of which stood a house of respectable but dreary aspect. The traveller paused: a strange, undefinable, dreamy apprehension took possession of his mind, and though by a strong effort he forced himself to proceed, it was not without something like a presentiment of evil that he clambered through a gap in the garden wall, leading his horse by the bridle.

The first object that struck his view was a tall white figure, standing in a menacing attitude, at the end of a long, bleak, gravel walk. Start not; it was not a ghost, though the traveller was half inclined to think so, till he walked up to it, and found that it was merely a noseless, moss-grown statue, rising from a wilderness of weeds which had once been an arbour. Our traveller smiled at his mistake, and leaving his horse to explore the garden alone, he made the best of his way to the house. It was a square building of gray stone, and as the pale lightning gleamed from time to time on its broken windows and yawning doors, it looked astonished and frightened at its own solitude. The traveller participated in its emotions, and as he entered the dreary vestibule his heart sank within him. There were doors on either side, and a staircase at one end of the vestibule, but the traveller felt no inclination to penetrate into the interior of so gloomy an abode—the more so, as it appeared totally uninhabited, and every one knows that such places are always the most alarming, seeing that there must be some cause for leaving them thus to their fate. The wind moaned sadly through the half-opened doors, and the traveller's situation became every moment more unpleasant; so that he resolved at last to do that which he might as well have done at first, namely, return to the inn, and wait for the morning to continue his journey. The dead leaves which the wind had driven into the vestibule rustled fearfully under his feet as he walked towards the door; but he made his exit in safety, and taking his horse by the bridle, regained the broken garden wall with a step of forced composure, for the traveller wished sadly to persuade himself that he was not frightened at all. When, however, he found himself safe on horseback, and in a fair way of reaching the inn, the rapidity of his movements and the long deep shudder which accompanied his parting steps, gave sufficient evidence of the uneasiness of his sensations.

Arrived at the place of his destination, of course his first inquiry was on the subject of the mysterious habitation he had left; so while he drank some warm wine to raise his spirits, he sent for the landlord to tell him all about it. The host stared—he had never heard of such a place. The traveller described its position and appearance exactly. The landlord had been born and brought up in that neighbourhood, but had never seen either lane or house answering the description.

The boys of the inn were called, but they were as ignorant, or as lying, as the host, who said, with a smile, that perhaps his guest was mistaken.

This was not to be borne; the traveller offered a reward to any one who would accompany him in a second visit to the house in question. As money does great things, he had soon more than one volunteer, and off they set with lights and horses. They travelled on for some way at a rapid pace, and the stranger frequently stopped to look about him—no house was to be seen. He perfectly recognised every object on the road which he had seen before, to a certain point, but there it assumed a new appearance. He must have passed the lane, he thought, and turned back again, amid the stifled merriment of his companions, but neither lane nor house was visible. All was straight, flat, and uniform. The traveller was as grave as a judge, but the rest could no longer conceal their laughter, and he himself, feeling rather shy on the subject, was glad to dismiss them with the promised reward.

He then proceeded on his journey alone, endeavouring to persuade himself that his late adventure was a dream, or something very like it. Scarcely, however, were the people of the inn well out of sight when, strange to say, the road bent mysteriously, as if by magic, to the right, and there it stood—the enchanted house at the end of the lane!!!

This time, thought the traveller, I will pierce the mystery, if it cost me my life. Leaving his horse in the lane, he entered the garden by the breach in the wall; he passed the old statue, he ascended the broken steps, and soon found himself in the solitary vestibule. There his nervous terrors redoubled. It seemed as if all the inhabitants of the Red Sea had agreed to haunt his imagination at once. Still, however, he went on, and began to mount the ruined staircase. He had reached the first

landing, and was about to continue his ascent, when the whole building seemed to give way at once, and he sank senseless amid the crashing ruin.

It was a bright, clear, autumnal morning; all nature seemed to waken refreshed from her sleep; the dew began to sparkle in the early beams; the birds sang up the rising sun; and the clouds of night rolled sullenly away, as if to avoid the brilliant presence of the day, when some peasants who were gayly going forth to their morning labour, were suddenly struck by seeing a horse saddled and bridled, but without a rider, engaged in cropping a scanty breakfast of the herbage which grew at the side of the road. A few steps farther showed them our poor traveller, lying senseless and bleeding near a heap of stones. The good souls took him up, and carried him to one of their cottages, where they succeeded in bringing him once more to life. It was only, however, for a short period. He gave directions for sending off a messenger to his friends, and to the inquiries concerning the state in which he was found, replied, by relating the above adventure, after which he lingered for an hour or two without speaking, and expired.

The people of the neighbourhood are divided in opinion respecting the traveller's narrative. Some opine that he fell asleep on his horse, dreamed the whole story, and was killed by a very opportune and natural tumble. But others, with much more show of probability, attribute the whole to the machinations of some evil spirit.

SCRAPS.—NO. V.

THE LAW OF BABYLON.

MEMOIR.

SHOWETH,

That although there be one person in this society who has obstinately and wilfully refused to make any contribution in writing towards our evening's amusement, it is, nevertheless, proposed to excuse him on the same principle that the Grand Desterham of Babylon excused a certain wit of that city.

Be it known, then, that the laws of Babylon were all founded on the grand principle, that crimes are simply diseases, and that punishments are the remedies by means of which alone the malefactor can be cured of the malady under which he labours. Thus, when a man was afflicted with the thieving disease, they applied hanging, which was found infallible. For minor maladies, such as lying, cheating, swearing, &c., they had various remedies—the bastinado, earslitting, nosecutting, actual cautery, and many others, but it was all for the patient's good, and to cure him of his ailment. Now, in Babylon, as in all large and flourishing cities, one of the greatest and most unpardonable crimes was wit. It was held as the most dangerous species of treason, and punished accordingly, especially as the grand desterham. at the time I speak of, had once been suspected of having thought a witty thing, though he never said it, and was of course much more severe than any other judge, in order to prove his zeal for the law, and abhorrence of witty practices.

It happened in the moon Assur, at twenty three o'clock in the forenoon, twenty-five thousand years four days and seven minutes after the world's creation—as specified in the indictment, and copied into the register of the court—a certain citizen of Babylon was brought before the grand desterham and his four colleagues, charged upon oath with being a wit and a traitor.

After the court had slept over five and twenty witnesses for the accusation, the prisoner was put upon his defence, being first told that he was indefensible.

The prisoner, however, undertook to prove that he was not a wit, but a fool. "For," said he, "if I had possessed any wit, I should not have been fool enough to show it. If, therefore, I have not shown any, you must acquit me of having any; and if I have shown any, you must pronounce me to be a fool for so doing, and consequently must acquit me any way."

The judges all looked at one another, and not understanding what the prisoner meant, they judged it to be blasphemy, and ordered him to be bastinadoed on the soles of his feet, after which they proceeded to judgment on the accusation, and unanimously found the prisoner guilty.

But the prisoner's counsel running over the indictment with his nose, found a flaw therein. For whereas it was stated that the time was twenty-five thousand years four days and seven minutes after the creation of the world, it was proved by the chief astrologico-astronomer to the empire, that it was only twenty-five thousand years four days six minutes and a half, so that the prisoner saved his life by half a minute, and was dismissed the court with a suitable admonition.

But the warning was in vain, he soon fell into his old courses; and one unlucky day was again brought before the grand desterham, his guilt clearly proved, and finally he himself ordered to be hanged, in the hope that this application might entirely remove the disease.

The grand desterham himself assisted at the operation, and the poor patient was exhibited on a high scaffold with the rope about his neck.

"Citizens of Babylon," said he, addressing the people, "rejoice! You shall soon see into what elevated situations wit brings a man in this sublime empire."

As he spoke the hangman hoisted him up, but the grand desterham vociferated, "Cut him down, cut him down; he is incorrigible."

The other members of the court objected greatly; but the grand desterham quoted the universal principle of the law, and added, "that as the patient before them was evidently incurable, the remedy could have no effect."

The poor wit was therefore allowed to go at liberty, but the grand desterham brought an old house over his head, for he was shortly after banished, being strongly suspected of good sense and judgment, though it was never clearly proved against him.

SCRAPS.—NO. VI.

. WRITTEN IN A BOOK OF DREAMS.

THIS life's a dream—so all have thought,
 Philosophers and poets too,
 And rhyme and reason both have wrought
 To prove what most have felt is true.

The warrior dream's a fiery chace,
 For glory ever flying on ;
 The statesman's an unceasing race,
 Full often lost and seldom won.

The merchant dreams of loss and gain,
 And gold that never brings content ;
 The student's a dull dream of pain,
 Mid mouldering books and hours misspent.

The lover in his airy hall
 Has joy dreams ever in his view ;
 And, though the falsest of them all,
 His dream perhaps is sweetest too.

The poet's dream's a dream of dreams,
 Of phantoms seen and pass'd away,
 Like dancing moats in sunny beams,
 Which shine but while they cross the ray.

Yes, all's a dream ; but who would part
 With one fond vision fancy knows,
 One bright delusion of the heart,
 For all that waking reason shows ?

Who'd quell the notes Hope gayly sings,
 Because they're tuned too witchingly ?
 Who'd pluck Imagination's wings,
 Because they bear her up too high ?

Let those who would so close this page,
 Where many dreams recorded lie ;
 It ne'er was meant to please the sage,
 But feeling's heart and fancy's eye.

SCRAPS.—NO. VII.

RABAS.

THERE is a garden near Bordeaux called Rabas, which may be considered the perfection of bad taste in gardening; I never saw anything so studiously ugly. There are straight walks as mathematically unnatural as if they had been laid out by an inhabitant of Laputa. There are hermitages, cottages, and wilderness, fit for Bagnage Well's tea gardens, together with sundry lions and tigers glaring in painted pasteboard. All the trees are pared as closely as possible, and there is eke a labyrinth for people to lose themselves, or not, as they like best.

It was in the said gardens of Rabas, which belong to a rich family in the neighbourhood; that these lines were written at the request of a young lady who was expected soon to change her name.

RABAS

Remember the moments of pleasure when past,
For they keep still a trace of their loveliness, lady,
Let the memory too of these flat gardens last,
With their trees cut so straight, and their straight walks so shady.

Come pledge me the oath I dare ask of thee yet,
Come pledge me the oath that their memory claims,
These gardens and moments, ah! ne'er to forget,
While your name is Anna, and my name is James.

But, lady! oh lady! your sex is so fickle,
There is no believing a word that they say;
Old Time like a reaper walks on with his sickle,
And gathers no emptier harvest than they.

Not content with discarding their fashions and dresses,
With their very own names they don't scorn to make war;
Thus while "Young" my identity ever expresses,
You soon may be somebody else than you are.

Come, find me some oath that more surely may bind thee ;
Come swear then by something that never shall change,
By the grace with which nature has lavish entwined thee,
Which time ne'er shall alter nor fortune estrange.

By thy smile's witching power, by thy mind's airy flight,
That larklike soars high o'er the place of its birth ;
And tuning its song in the porches of light,
Seems to sorrow that e'er it must sink to the earth.

Come swear then—but what can I swear in return ?—
To remember thee ever wherever I rove,
Though my heart may be dead, and my breast but its urn,
I offer thee friendship—'tis better than love.

DOMESTIC LIFE IN FRANCE.

Mortel qui que tu sois, Prince Brame ou soldat,
 Homme ! ta grandeur sur la terre,
 N'appartient point à ton état,
 Elle est toute à ton caractère.

BEAUMARCHAIS.

THERE are two words wanting in French which an Englishman can scarcely do without—*comfort* and *home*. The hiatus is not alone in the language, the idea is wanting. Speak to a Frenchman of pleasure, he can understand you—of gayety, amusement, dissipation, he has no difficulty: but talk to him of *comfort*, and explain it how you will, you can never make it intelligible to him. In like manner, he will comprehend everything that can be said on the theatre, the coffee house, the club, the court, or the exchange; but *home*—there is no such thing. *Chez-soi* is not the word: *intérieur* comes nearer to it, for that particularizes, but still it is not home—home, where all the affections of domestic life, all the kindly feelings of the heart, all the bright weaknesses of an immortal spirit clad in clay—where all, all the rays of life centre, like a gleam of sunshine breaking through a cloud, and lighting up one spot in the landscape while all the rest is wrapped in shadow. We may carry ambition, pride, vengeance, hatred, avarice, about with us in the world; but every gentler feeling is for *home*: and miserable is he who finds no such resting place in the wide desert of human existence.

I speak not of all Frenchmen. I have met some who had the feeling in their hearts, and scarcely knew what it meant. They had formed themselves a home, but had not a name for it. But these are the accidents, and in the generality of French families it is not, and it cannot be so.

Marriage in France is one of the most extraordinary things that ever was invented. It is a state into which men enter, seemingly, from a principle of inevitable necessity—the *besoin de se marier*; or else who would engage their fate to that of a person whose mind, educa-

tion, and disposition, is generally wholly unknown to them! The first principle of a woman's education all over the world is deceit. She is taught, and wisely taught, to conceal what she feels. But in France they try to teach her not to feel it at all. Educated in the greatest retirement, watched with the most jealous suspicion, as soon as a favourable opportunity presents itself, she is brought forward to show off all her accomplishments, before a man who is destined for her husband, and is bidden to assume his tastes, and coincide in his opinions. Little affectation, however, is necessary. It is all a matter of convention. The one party wishes for a wife, and marries without knowing anything about her; the other wishes for liberty, and is married without caring to whom. This is the great change in a French woman's life. While single she is guarded, and restrained in everything; each action, each word, each look is regulated; but the moment she is married all is freedom, gayety, and dissipation. From a caterpillar she becomes a butterfly, and flutters on among the multitude, to be chased by every grown child that sees her. These are not the materials for happiness! But this is not all. Every circumstance, every custom on these occasions leaves little room for the expectation of domestic felicity.

A young lady is to be married, and a young gentleman is found in the necessary predicament. She is promised a certain dower, and he is possessed of a certain fortune, into the state of which, as in duty bound, her parents make the strictest inquiry. But the case is widely different on the part of the young gentleman. No inquiry must be made by him. The character of his future bride it is impossible for him to know, that of her relations concerns him little, and into their means of giving the dower they promise, he is forbidden to inquire, on pain of excommunication. Any doubt on the subject would show that their daughter did not possess his love! Oh that prostituted name love! used every day to qualify the basest and most ignoble feelings of our nature.

But to go on with the history of a French marriage. The contract generally imports, that the father of the young lady shall pay a certain yearly sum to her husband, and a further sum is promised to be left her at the death of her parents. The benefits of this arrangement

are obvious and manifold, and well calculated to check the exorbitant power which husbands have over their wives.

A part of the ceremony, and one of the most essential, is the *corbeille de mariage*, or wedding present from the lover to his bride. This is scarcely a matter of courtesy alone, as some might imagine, but almost of right, which the young lady would yield upon no consideration whatever. It is a sort of price, and is expected to be the amount of two years' revenue.

The *corbeille* is a basket lined with white satin, and containing a variety of articles of dress and jewelry. One indispensable part is a cashmere; and the rest is made up of laces, diamonds, and all the thousand little nothings which enter into the composition of a fine lady.

The civil ceremony at the commune is all which the present law requires, but the religious part is seldom if ever dispensed with. The first takes place generally in the morning, without any display. The ceremonies of the church, however, are delayed till near midnight, and have in general the advantage of new scenery, dresses, and decorations. The higher the class, and the better the taste of the parties, of course, the simpler are all the arrangements, and the fewer and more nearly connected are the persons present. With such a system is it possible that there can be such a thing as *home*? That it is possible—that it may be found, is one of the finest traits of the French character. All their habits, all their customs, from time immemorial, have been opposed to domestic life; and yet they occasionally create it for themselves.

TRAVELLING.

Ye glittering towns with wealth and splendour crown'd,
Ye fields where summer spreads profusion round,
Ye lakes whose vessels catch the busy gale,
Ye bending swains that dress the flowery vale,
For me your tributary stores combine,
Creation's tenant, all the world is mine.

The Traveller.

WHAT was the cause of our setting out so late the personage who certainly had the chief hand in it best knows, but it was between four and five o'clock in the afternoon before we got from the door of the Hôtel de France, on our way towards Pau and the Pyrenees.

The carriage, too, was unlike anything that the ingenuity of man ever before invented; not indeed from itself, but from its appendices: every hole and corner was crammed with all sorts of conveniences. There was a whole subjunctive mood of comforts—everything that we might, could, should, or ought to want, piled up in grotesque forms both inside and out. I never saw anything like it but the carriage of a lady, whom I once met coming from Italy, and that, indeed—Heaven help her, poor thing, for I am sure when she was in it she could not help herself.

At length, however, we did set off, and passing by several *guingettes*, or, as it may be translated, tea gardens, though they drink no tea there, left Bordeaux behind us and proceeded on our way to Langon. It was night ere we reached Barsac, not more worthy fame on account of its good wines than its bad pavements. For what purpose they were constructed, I defy any one to explain; but they answer three objects, breaking carriages, laming horses, and jolting the unfortunate traveller to such a degree, that were there anything contraband in his composition, it would be sure to be shaken out of him.

At Langon we stopped to supper, during which important avocation we were waited on by a smiling, black-eyed country girl with scarcely a word of French to her back; for be it remembered, that here, on the banks of

the Garonne, all the peasantry speak Gascon, as their mothers did before them ; and after having made several ineffectual attempts to arrive at our little attendant's intellects, through any other channel than that of her native tongue, I was obliged to have recourse to that as a last resource. Never did I perceive joy and satisfaction so plainly depicted, as in her countenance, when she heard the first two or three words of Gascon which came out of my mouth ; but the effect was not so good as might have been anticipated, for in that language she had no lack of expressions, and would fain have entered into a long conversation with me, which put my knowledge to the stretch. However, in the mean time, my companion, from what whim I know not, had persuaded the rest of the people in the house that I was a Chinese, to which, perhaps, my fur travelling cap lent itself in a degree. He explained to them also, that China was the country from whence tea was brought, and to this, I believe, we were indebted for the best tea the place could afford, and for being stared at all the rest of the evening.

We travelled on from Languon with the intention of sleeping at Bazas ; but by the time we arrived at that place, the night was so far wasted, that we agreed to continue our route without stopping.

The dress of the country people now began to vary ; we had no longer the high Rochelle caps, which the women in Bordeaux sometimes wear, and which resemble very much the helmet of Hector, in the picture of his parting from Andromache ; nor the neat twisted handkerchiefs, with which the grisettes dress their heads, but, as a substitute, a flat, square piece of linen, brought straight across the forehead, and tied under the chin in the fashion of the Landes. We had lost, too, the neat, pretty foot and well-turned ankle, with the stocking as white as snow, the shoe cut with the precision of an artist, and sanded up the leg with black riband ; and instead had nothing but good, stout, bare feet, well clothed in dirt, and hardened by trotting over the rough roads of the country. The men were generally dressed in blue carter's shirts, with the Bearnais berret, not at all unlike in shape the Scotch blue bonnet, but larger, of a firmer texture, and brown colour.

We breakfasted at Roquefort, celebrated, I believe, for nothing, although there is a sort of cheese which carries

the name of Roquefort about with it, and in the town is a pottery, said to be upon English principles. This we did not see, but pursued our journey to Mont de Marsan, the capital of the Landes, where we began to enjoy the benefits arising from monopoly when applied to posting, being obliged to wait nearly an hour for horses. Monopoly may be called injustice to the many for the benefit of a few. In great public works, which no one man could have the means to execute, and where individual competition is either impossible or destructive, governments are but just to grant particular privileges to the companies of men who undertake them, and to secure to them a reward proportioned to the enterprise; but, in every instance where various persons can place themselves in comparison one with another, in the service of the public, the public alone can minutely judge, and justly reward, and by so doing secure to itself the best servants at the lowest price. The French government, however, are rather fond of monopoly; that of posting is only one among several. As far as a monopoly can be well organized for the benefit of the public, posting in France is so. One postmaster is stationed in every town, who has alone the right to furnish horses for the road. He is obliged by law to be provided with a certain number, according to the size and position of the place in which he is established, but this number is very frequently insufficient, and not always complete.

Many provisions are made for rendering the postillions attentive to their duty, and civil to the traveller. Their recompense is fixed by the post book at fifteen sous per post of two leagues; but the ordinary custom is to give them double, and generally something more, which they make no scruple of demanding, though positively forbid to do so by their instructions. Every postmaster is obliged to hold a register, in which any complaint either against himself or his postillions may be recorded by the traveller, and countersigned by the next commissary of police. This is generally visited every month, and the punishment consequent on any serious charge is very severe.

Our delay at the Mont de Marsan enabled us to walk through the town, which seemed to our post-bound eyes an ill-built, straggling place enough, with the people not very civil, and the streets not very clean. Notwithstanding, we found our inn the cleanest and neatest we

had seen in France; I could have fancied myself in Old England, if they would but have charged the Sauterne ten shillings a bottle.

The want of horses here was but a prelude to what we were to meet farther on, for at Grenade we found that two carriages, which had preceded us, were waiting for the return of the postillions from Aire; so, to make the best of it, we ordered our dinner and strolled out to the bridge over the Adoure, where we amused ourselves by talking all the nonsense that came into our heads, and watching some washerwomen washing sheets in the stream below. They do it with extreme dexterity, taking the largest sheet one can imagine, and after having folded it in their hands, with one sweep extend it flat upon the surface of the river; they then dip the end next them, and catching a little of the water pass it rapidly over the whole by drawing the sheet quickly to the bank.

After having watched this proceeding for some time, we returned to dinner, which consisted principally of the legs of geese salted, a favourite dish all over this part of France; and then amused ourselves by scrutinizing the antics of a large black monkey in the inn yard.

I have an invincible hatred towards a monkey. It is too like humanity—a sort of caricature that nature has set up, to mock us little lords of creation. To see all its manlike, gentlemanlike ways of going on, gave me a bitter sense of humiliation. It is very odd, that we should thus dislike our next link in the grand chain of the universe.

A PRIME MINISTER'S MONKEY.

Il mio cuore gl'inalza un monumento dentro me stesso, tanto durevole quanto la mia vita. Aveva egli della bontà per me : ma e per chi mai non ne avea ?—GANGANELLI.

SEVERAL years ago I went one day to dine with the Duc de R—. The world say that he was not the greatest of ministers, but he was much more—he was the most amiable of men. However, that does not signify, he is dead now : and if politicians have forgotten him, he at least made himself a memory in the affection of the good and the gratitude of the poor.

He lived at that time in the Rue de Bac ; and, as I knew him to be punctual, I got into the cabriolet exactly at nine minutes and three quarters before the time he had appointed ; for I calculated that it would take me just so long to drive from the end of the Rue de la Paix to the Rue de Bac, allowing one minute for a stoppage, and half a minute for a call I had to make at—it does not signify where, for surely much mischief could not be done in half a minute.

However, the stoppage did not take place ; and I changed my mind about the call ; so that I was as nearly as possible one minute and a half before my time. The duke was still more incorrect, for he was three minutes and a half after his. Thus, by the best calculation, there were exactly five minutes to spare. Accordingly, a page showed me into a saloon to wait the arrival of the duke. Now there was a fire in the *salon*, (I did not say a stove,) no, but an actual fire, with an armchair on one side, and the duke's favourite monkey on the other. So I sat myself down in the armchair, and began considering the monkey ; who seemed not at all pleased with my presence. He grinned, he mowed, he chattered, and every now and then made little starts forward, showing his white teeth all prepared to bite me. I am not fond of being bit in any way, so I first of all took up the tongs, thinking to knock his brains out if he attacked me ; but, then, I thought that it would be cowardly to use cold iron against an unarmed monkey ; and

putting down the tongs I resolved on kicking him to atoms if he pursued his malicious inclinations. But just at the moment that we were in this state of suspended hostilities, the duke came in to make peace, like some more potent power between two petty sovereigns.

"I was just speculating, monseigneur," said I, "upon the policy of kicking a prime minister's monkey."

"It would be bad policy with some men," said the duke, smiling; "but I hope that Jockoe has given you no reason to use him so severely."

"None precisely, as yet, my lord," replied I; "but he threatened more active measures, and I believe we should have come to blows if you had not come in."

"It was only fear," said the duke; "fear that makes many men as well as monkeys assume a show of valour; for Jockoe is a very peaceable gentleman: are you not, Jockoe?"

The monkey, with a bound, sprang in the duke's arms; and I never saw a more complete contrast than there was between the fine intelligent countenance of the minister, and the mean, anxious, cunning face of the ape.

"By Heaven!" cried I, "it is the best picture I ever saw."

"What?" asked the duke.

"Why, your excellency and the monkey," answered I; and for fear he should misunderstand me, I added boldly what I thought, "It has all that contrast can do for it. It is at once the two extremes of human nature. You, monseigneur, at the height of all that is great and noble, and the monkey coming in at the sag end, a sort of salvage to humanity."

"You do not consider the monkey as a human being?" asked the duke.

"If he is not," said I, "in truth he is very like it."

Monsieur de S—— coming in interrupted the duke's reply, but by his affection for the animal, I do not think we differed much in opinion.

AIRE.

Let school-taught pride disassemble all it can,
 These little things are great to little man.

The Traveller.

OH AIRE! AIRE! I shall never forget thee. Not because Alaric, king of the Visigoths, made thee his habitation, but because within thy walls were we detained a whole night for want of horses, devoured by vermin, pestered by postillions, and bamboozled by innkeepers.

Be it known to *every* traveller, of every kind, sort, and description, whatever be his aim, object, or occupation—wherever he comes from, or wherever he is going—that if he travel in a “*petite calèche*,” with two persons in the inside, and one servant on the out, together with a compliance to all the forms and regulations, as laid down in the book of French posts, he is not obliged by law to have more than two horses to the said *calèche*, paying for each at the rate of forty sous per post. But be it equally known, that at every relay he comes to, the postmaster will endeavour to force upon him a third horse, which being then thirty sous per post for each horse, will be ten sous more than he would otherwise pay. Now every man may easily make the calculation for himself, and settle the accounts between his comfort and his pocket as he likes best. The rich traveller will say, “Hang the ten sous!” the poor traveller will say, “Why, it is a consideration!” The avaricious traveller will always have his thumb between those two leaves of the post book; and there will be one sort of traveller who will say, “Though I can afford to lose it, there may be some who follow that cannot, and therefore I will not submit to the imposition.”

Now we being poor travellers, and in the category above mentioned respecting the *calèche*, we held out for our ten sous per post, and met little annoyance on that account till we arrived at Aire; but there the postillion would insist upon being paid for three horses, though we had had but two. I called for the postmaster. He

was not to be found; and, as it was apparent from the number of carriages having priority of oufs, which were waiting in the inn yard for want of horses, that we should not be able to depart that night, we took a stroll down to the river, leaving the angry postillion keeping guard over our vehicle.

At the ford, just arrived from the Pau side of the Adouze, we met two carriages, proceeding to the same miserable inn where we were lodged. They were filled with a lovely family from our own dear land, and I know not why, before we knew who or what they were, we could have sworn to them, and proudly, too, for our country people.

In a few minutes the postillion rode after us, desiring us, in a sulky tone, to pay him, and as we found that the postmaster had now returned, we went back with him. There was nothing to be said against the law, and in consequence the matter was decided in our favour; we paid the sum due, and for the sake of his insolence gave the postillion but thirty instead of forty sous, which we had been in the custom of paying.

As soon as he had got it his rage broke forth in the most violent abuse of England and Englishmen. Everything that his fancy could invent in the way of vituperation was poured upon us, the more especially as he perceived that it highly amused a crowd of French *laquais* and postillions, who had nothing better to do than to look on. I let him proceed as long as he pleased, and then, as he was going to mount his horse and ride away, I stopped him, desired the postmaster to produce his register, took a pen from the ink, and was about to inscribe my complaint in form: but now the whole scene was changed; nothing was heard but prayers and entreaties that I would give up my design. The postmaster gently opposed my approach to the book. The postmaster's wife took hold of the skirts of my coat, and assured me that the "boy was ruined" if I insisted. "Utterly ruined," echoed the postmaster. He was "*bon garçon*," some of the neighbours said, "but *mauvaise tête*."

I replied, that his *mauvaise tête* must be corrected, and made a show of insisting; but now they became clamorous. Could I have the heart, they asked, to throw him for ever out of bread? I said that if that were the consequence perhaps I might not. They assured me it was,

that he would never be employed again, and used so many arguments, that I had a good opportunity of relinquishing what I had scarcely intended seriously; and, with a very grave admonition, suffered our youth to ride away.

Of all the wretched places that ever poor traveller was tormented in, the most wretched is that inn at Aire. No dinner was to be got, for all that was in the house had been given to the English family we had seen arrive. No milk was to be had for our tea. Only one bedroom was vacant, with two dirty beds, filth, fleas, bugs, and a bad smell. However, here we laid down in our clothes; but no sooner were we asleep than we were galloped over by the vermin in every direction; it was like a charge of light horse. At length, with the morning, came the happy news that there were horses; and away we went towards Pau. I can fancy a Catholic soul getting out of purgatory nearly as happy as we were to leave Aire.

We now met a great many of the peasantry, men and women, riding the short mountain horses. The features of the people, as well as the scenery, were here very different from what they had been in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, and all showed that we were entering Bearn. Here, as in many other parts of France, no such thing is thought of as a side saddle for a woman, who rides exactly like a man, and very often quite as well. I once knew a lady in Brittany, who, both for mustaches and horsemanship, would have done admirably for a cavalry officer.

The country gradually rose into hills, generally richly cultivated and scattered with wood; but nothing was yet to be seen of the Pyrenees. The character of the scenery was generally very much like that of Devonshire, but there was a great difference in the peasantry, who were here poor and ill looking in comparison.

Going up a steep ascent, as we approached nearer to Pau, we were tormented by a parcel of little, dirty, ragged children, who, with a peculiar kind of tormenting drony song, kept begging by the side of the carriage; there were at least twenty of them, who, with flowers in their hands, continued to run by our side for near a mile. At length they left us; and, on reaching the top of the hill, an unrivalled scene burst upon our view. Immediately below was a broad plain, or rather valley,

with a little world of its own within its bosom—villages, and hamlets, and vineyards, and streams, rich in fertility, and lighted up with sunshine—all peaceful, and sweet, and gentle; while directly behind the hill that bounded it on the other side, rose the vast line of the Pyrenees, in all nature's grandest and most magnificent forms. It is impossible to describe the effect that such mountain scenery produces—one gasps as it were to take it all in. After contemplating for any time those immense works of nature, if we turn to look at the dwellings of man, which seem crouching themselves at the feet of their lofty neighbours, the lord of the creation dwindles to an insect, and the proudest of his palaces looks like the refuge of a caterpillar. Before we can reconcile ourselves to our own littleness, we have to remember that this insect, with his limited corporeal powers, has found means to make the vast world, and all that it produces, subservient to his will and conducive to his comfort, and then, indeed, his mind shows as exalted and powerful as his body is feeble and insignificant.

I cannot help thinking, that there is a sort of harmony between the spirit of man and all external nature; the heart expands and the mind enlarges itself to all that is bright and grand. A wide, beautiful scene steals us away from selfish griefs and cares; and it would appear to me impossible to do a bad or a base action in the presence of these awful mountains.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF HENRY IV.

EVEN in the most monotonous existence, every day gives rise to so many little accidents, each of which bears its comment and its counter comment, and its subsequent and collateral ideas, that were one to write a diary, in which thoughts had a place as well as circumstances, we should pass one half of our time in recording the other.

Three hundred and sixty-five registers every year of one's life! Ay, and registers crammed full, too; for where is the man whose paucity of ideas is so great that he has not at least five in a second? If they would but invent a way of writing them, what a blessing it would be! for at least fifty escape past redemption while one is engaged in transcribing a word of three syllables. Thus I have forgotten what I was going to say! But certainly it is the most extraordinary thing in nature, and clearly shows of what a different essence is the soul from the body, that mind so far outstrips every corporeal faculty. Before the tongue or the hand can give utterance or character to any one word, thought has sped on before for some hundreds of miles, called at every post-house on the way, ordered new horses and refreshments, and is often, alas! obliged to come back to his master, whom he finds lumbering on in a heavy post chaise the Lord knows how far behind.

But to return, for surely I have quitted the subject far enough. If I were to write an exact account of everything that happened at Pau, and everything we said and thought thereupon, it would make a goodly volume and be sufficiently tiresome, no doubt; but as I am getting rapidly towards the end of the first half of the period which I have undertaken to commemorate, and have yet got all my journey through the Pyrenees to tell, I must not dilate.

Nevertheless, I love narrative and hate description; and I would a great deal rather tell everything simply as it happened, and what it called up in my own mind, than huddle them all together, like an account of the Chinese

empire in a book of geography, beginning with the boundaries and ending with the Lord's Prayer in Chinese.

However, as it must be done, I will begin boldly, and give a regular account of Pau, the chief town of the Basses Pyrenées—a very neat little place, situated on the ridge of a hill, crowned by the château where that love and war making monarch, Henri Quatre, first saw the light of day. In the valley below runs a broad, shallow river, called the Gave* of Pau, which frets on with the tumultuous hurry of a mountain stream, and dashing petulantly over every little bank of stones it meets in its way, passes under a pretty stone bridge, which leads on the road to the Eaux bonnes, and to the village of Jurançon, famous for its wines. Beyond the town, proceeding along the ridge of the hill, (which runs with the course of the river due west,) there is a fine park planted with beech trees, which afford a complete shade from the heat of the sun. The highest walk, extending for nearly a mile, commands a most beautiful and ever-changing view of the mountains, which lie, pile above pile, stretched along the whole extent of the southern sky. Indeed, they form a scene of enchantment, and are never for a moment the same—sometimes so involved in mist, that they form but a faint blue background to the nearest hills—sometimes so distinct, that one might fancy he saw the izzard† bounding from rock to rock. The course of the sun, also, alters them entirely by the difference of the shadows; and the clouds, frequently rolled in white masses halfway down their peaks, give them an appearance of much greater height than when they stand out in the plain blue sky. ~ But however they may appear, even at the times they are clearest, there is still that kind of airy uncertainty about them which makes one scarcely think them real. They seem the bright delusion of some fairy dream, and, indeed, I was almost inclined to suppose it a deception, when on waking the third morning after my arrival, I looked for the mountains, and found that, like Aladdin's palace, they were gone—not a vestige of them remaining—not a trace where they had been. The sky, indeed, was cloudy, but the day otherwise fair; and to any one unaccus-

* Gave signifies water; and in the Pyrenees this name is given to all the mountain streams.

† The chamois of the Pyrenees.

tomed to mountain scenery, it would appear impossible that any clouds could hide objects at other times seen so near. But so it was : for two days we saw nothing of them, and then again the curtain of clouds rose majestically from before them, and left the whole as clear and grand as ever.

The best view is certainly from the park, where, looking over the river and the village of Jurançon, scattered among beeches and vineyards, the eye runs up a long valley, marked at various distances with clumps of trees and hamlets, and every now and then a tall poplar or two lessening in the perspective, till the first rising rocks appear beyond, seeming to block up the pass, and increasing one above the other, more and more faint and misty, till the abrupt "Pic du Midi" towers above them all, looking like a cloud upon the distant sky.

The climate of Pau is variable, but never very bad; the changes, while I was there, were frequent, but not very excessive. Lodging is dear and scarce, but every other convenience and luxury abundant and cheap, so long as one keeps within the range of nature's productions, for the arts have made but small progress in the town since Henri Quatre's times.

The country round is rich in itself, and richly cultivated; and, indeed, it is not often that scenes of such sublimity are mingled with so much fertility. From the window of our lodging, we could look over a wide view, covered with woods and vines, large fields of maize and corn, with peach and plum trees growing in the open country, and the bright red blossom of the pomegranate mixing with the dark foliage of the other trees, and forming a strong contrast, not unlike that of the rich valley with the rocky mountains beyond.

The society here is very agreeable during the winter. There are many English, who have made it their residence; but it is too distant, and too retired, for those of our countrymen whose extravagance, or whose crimes, have driven them from their native country; nor have any of the coldly proud, or ostentatiously rich, yet found their way thither. The English, therefore, are gladly received, and even esteemed, by the French of Pau, who (unlike the natives of many other parts of France) have no cause to be afraid that either their purse or their consequence will suffer by admitting British travellers to their society. The best parts of the French char-

acter, also, are to be met with here, while many of the vices which find a hotbed in great cities are lost in this retirement. I should suppose that the climate of Pau was healthy; the people seem strong, and with their brown skins, small black eyes, long dark hair, and the peculiar cap they wear, put me in mind of Calmuck Tartars. They are in general short, broad made, and muscular. In almost every other country we daily see huge mountains of flesh, that look like tumuli for entombing the soul; but there is nothing of the kind at Pau. They are sturdy, but not fat—well-fed, but not pampered. As I am speaking of the inhabitants of Pau, I must not forget the nightingales, the lizards, and the butterflies, which form no contemptible part of the population. The lizards are actually in millions, basking in the sun, and walking leisurely about, with all the insolence of a tolerated sect. No sooner does the sun begin to set, than the nightingale renders the whole air musical with its song. There is a little valley just below the town, warm, tranquil, and wooded, and here they congregate in multitudes, and wait for the night to begin their tuneless competition. I have, indeed, occasionally heard them in the day, even here when the day is intensely hot, but it is only for a moment—a sort of rehearsal for the evening; and I must confess, that however beautiful the notes may be in themselves, they want half the charm in the broad light. They seem peculiarly appropriated to the night. There is a sort of plaintive melody about them, that is lost in all the gay buzz and bustle of sunshine. But at night, when the dull crowd, whose feelings are more purely animal, have left Nature to her own quiet pensiveness—when there is no sound to distract, and no light to dazzle—the song of the nightingale comes like the voice of a spirit rising alone to heaven, with that kind of melancholy, solitary sweetness, which harmonizes so sweetly with anything vast and beautiful.

I am not very well sure that I could make my feelings on the subject understood, and therefore I will not try, but go on to the butterflies, some of which are extremely beautiful. There is a superstition among the common people concerning one of these insects they call the angel. They suppose that the ethereal spirits visit earth under its form, and that whoever is fortunate enough to have one of them in his house, is exempt from the

friendly visits of all evil spirits, and from many of the common misfortunes of life. On which principle, they do not at all scruple to catch them—and, angel or no angel, stick them on a cork with a large pin. But this is nothing to a diabolical way they have of making fishing lines in Spain.

FLEURETTE.

I know not, in truth, how it has happened, but certain it is, that a great portion of the inhabitants of Pau have a very strong resemblance to Henri Quatre. One might indeed say, here, that he was the father of his people, at least there is a great family likeness. However, the Bearnais are both fond and proud of him. All the shop windows are full of portraits of the warm-hearted monarch, and very often is added that of poor Fleurette, the gardener's daughter. She was the first object of his love. He was very young, when one of the princes of his family passing through Bearn, accompanied him to the archery ground. There were many of the youths of the neighbourhood shooting for the prize, which was a bouquet of flowers fastened on the butt; and many a Bearnais girl looking on, and hoping that her lover would be the winner. Among others was Fleurette and her father, the old gardener of the château. She was a lovely, simple, country girl, and the young prince, scarcely less simple than herself, felt strongly attracted towards the gardener's daughter. Apparently, it was without any design that he first began to speak to her; but the charm grew upon him: insensibly his language became more ardent, and then first began that sort of undefined courtship, which has from thenceforward been called "Conter Fleurette." He was so occupied, it seems, that he did not even perceive that all the rest had missed the mark, till his cousin turned, saying to him, "Shoot, Henri; shoot, Henri;" and gave him the bow. His arrow did not miss, and at once lodged in the bouquet, which was no sooner won than given to Fleurette.

What were the use of telling a long story about an everyday matter? Henri loved and was loved in return; but Fleurette was a country girl, and her lover was a prince. It is easy to imagine all the stages of the business. She commenced by admiring him as her prince; as such, too, she was flattered and pleased by his attention. She began to think less of the rank and more of the lover. She forgot the rank altogether, but

he himself became more dear. She loved him not as a prince, but as a man, and yielded as a woman. And then all the golden dreams of hope and passion came hovering round her. She never fancied such a thing as broken faith. She never thought that princes could betray. She never believed that Henri's heart would change. He would love her, and she would love him, until their lives did end. His glory would be her pride, and his good be her happiness.

Thus it went on from day to day ; every evening he stole away from the castle to meet her. There was a pleasure in the scenery, though all the world knew how matters went ; and when any one asked where the prince was gone, the reply was, "Conter Fleurette."

At length it so happened, that among other guests at the château was a fair girl whose rank and beauty gave Fleurette some pangs. The world said that Henri was to receive her hand ; and the ceaseless tongue of Fame kept ringing it in Fleurette's ears, till her cheeks began to turn pale, and she often wandered into the woods to think in solitude. On one fair day, while she was thus employed, the prince and her rival passed before her. She could no longer doubt, for Henri held her hand, and there was an ardour in his eyes, and a tenderness in his manner, which Fleurette had wished, and hoped, and believed, were never shown to any but herself.

The hour of their meeting came ; and Henri stole from the castle to the place of rendezvous. It was close to a spring which, falling from the rock, had formed a deep basin for itself below ; and, round about, the trees had grown up, nourished by its waters ; and as if in gratitude bent down over the clear still pool, hiding it from the rays of the obtrusive sun.

Henri waited—all was calm, and still, and silent ; but there was no Fleurette. He grew anxious, alarmed—perhaps his heart smote him. He walked rapidly backward and forward, when suddenly he saw a scrap of paper lying in his path. He hurried back to the castle, opened it, and read, "You have passed near me."

The prince's agitation called instant inquiry upon him. But all mystery, all concealment was now over ; an agony of fear and doubt had taken possession of his mind ; and calling loudly to others to aid in his search for Fleurette, he hurried from the château. Servants followed with lights, and soon found the unhappy girl, whose sor-

row had been short, though keen. She had chosen the wild basin, the spot near which had so often been the scene of her happiness, now to be her grave. Her heart had never loved but once, and broken to find that love betrayed.

Henri was nearly frantic, but remorse was now in vain. Her father, too, who was left in the world alone—the tale had reached him, and he came to where his poor child lay. His eye first fell upon her lover; he clasped his hands, while agony and wrath struggled hard in his bosom. “Oh that thou wert not my prince!” he cried—“oh that thou wert not my prince,” and he cast himself down beside her.

It was long ere Henri forgot Fleurette; perhaps he never forgot her, for that first passion which sheds a new light upon our being—the brightest thing our youth has ever known—hangs fondly round remembrance, and yields neither to years nor sorrows. Time softens it; but memory hallows it; and on the tomb raised in our heart to past affection, is graven an inscription which nothing can erase—“To the brightest friend of our youth, Early Love”—so runs the epitaph, “this sepulchre is given by Experience, Memory, and Regret;” Hope too would have added her name, but her eyes were dim with tears.

The character of Henri Quatre would certainly have been brighter had he wanted those failings of which poor Fleurette was the first victim: yet as a man of strong passions in a dissolute age, as a king, a conqueror, a soldier; warm, generous, enthusiastic, our sterner morality is but too much inclined to unbend towards him, and to attribute his faults to the same ardent nature which might lead him occasionally into error, but which carried him on to so many noble exploits.

The love that the Bearnais bear to the memory of their native prince is beyond all bounds. In the reign of a vainer monarch, Louis XIV., a subscription was opened at Pau for erecting a statue to Henri. Louis liked statues to nobody else but himself: and though he did not absolutely prohibit the proposed monument, he caballed and intrigued with the people of the place, till he forced them to change their original intention into erecting a statue to himself, instead of one to his progenitor.

It was accordingly fixed in its place with great pomp;

but in an inscription on the pedestal, the Bearnais took care to state, that the statue was erected "à Louis XIV., roi de France et de Navarre, *petit fils** de notre grand Henri."

* To Louis XIV., king of France and Navarre, grandson of our great Henry. The force of the satire is not to be rendered in an English translation.

THE EAUX BONNES.

Nulle di più immirabile che un suolo il più fertile sotto il clima più bello, ovunque intersecato di vive acque ovunque popolato da villaggi.—GANGANELLI.

From the higher range of the Pyrenees, which forms, as it were, an immense barrier between France and Spain, run a multitude of lateral valleys, each enclosing within its bosom its streams, its villages, and its plains, possessing its own peculiar race of inhabitants, its own usages and superstitions, and often having little communication with any world beyond its boundary of mountains. One of the sweetest and (until late years) one of the least frequented of these valleys, is the Valley d'Ossau, which leads apparently in a direct line to the foot of the Pic du Midi de Pau. I had often stood in the park, and looked up the long vista of hills before me, fancying a thousand things in the blue indistinctness of distance, and lending it as many charms as imagination can bestow on uncertainty; a longing took possession of me, to approach myself nearer to those airy hills whose fairy brightness haunted me; and I was never satisfied till we were on our way to the Eaux Bonnes. Of this little watering place, lying in the deepest recesses of the mountains, report had told such tales, that I got out of patience with my own fancy for believing them. You stupid fool, said I to Imagination, you are only getting up a disappointment for yourself and me; methinks Experience ought to have made you wise by this time; witness all the unpleasant scrapes into which you have plunged me. Just as I was reasoning thus with Fancy, came by a blind man, led by a dog; the sturdy cur would come into our courtyard for some little affair of his own, and kept tugging and pulling at the rope which tied him, till the blind man, who felt he was going wrong, but did not know by what means to set him right, was fain to comply and let him have his own way. So I gave up the matter too, and we ordered horses for the Eaux Bonnes, for it was impossible for the blind man's dog to

tug him into our courtyard one bit more violently than my fancy tugged me into the mountains. And hereby I leave and bequeath the similitude between a blind man and his dog, and any man his fancy, to any person who may be disposed to profit by the same; giving up all right, title, and claim whatever upon the said similitude or simile, and declaring and avowing that I will have nothing more to do with it. Always provided, nevertheless, and be it hereby understood and agreed, that these presents be no further considered as gift, bequest, donation, or legacy, than as far as in me lies to give, bequeath, or devise, the similitude or simile aforesaid, inasmuch as it may have been uninvented, unpossessed, and unappropriated by any other person or persons whatsoever; otherwise, this item to be null, void, and of no effect, anything herein before said to the contrary notwithstanding.

By the time the horses came the next morning, I had quite resolved to be very much disappointed; and I got into the carriage, with precisely the same sort of unwillingness that the animal usually cited as the most striking example of consistency evinces when it is obliged to run according to its driver's will instead of its own. However, the day was fine, and nature seemed resolved to smile me into a good humour. We rattled down through the town, passed the bridge over the river, commented on the number of beggars, admired the view of the town from the banks, and then turning in among the lesser hills which lie to the left of the Valley d'Ossau, lost at once the prospect of the mountains, and might have forgotten that we were in the Pyrenees.

Indeed, the soft slopes covered with meadows and fields, handsome modern houses and pleasure grounds, and streams that flowed gently on with scarcely more force than sufficient to turn a mill, took from us all remembrance that we were within a few miles of some of the highest mountains in Europe.

As we proceeded, however, the scene gradually began to change; the houses were less frequent, and seemed to gather themselves into villages, the rivers became more rapid, and the country, though highly cultivated, assumed the appearance of a fine park; large clumps of oak and fir, lying scattered in every direction, and the tops of the hills hiding themselves in deep plantations. Still we saw nothing of the Pyrenees, and even the

people seemed to differ in nothing from the common Bearnais of Pau, except, indeed, that the women had discarded their shoes as well as stockings, or rather carried them in their hands instead of on their feet.

We stopped at last to change horses at Savignac. A gentle slope leads from the village through some thick trees into the valley; and dashing down with all the *éclat* of fresh horses and postillion, we found ourselves, in a moment, in a scene that leaves description, and almost imagination, behind.

The valley winding up to the peak again lay before us; but we were now among the mountains indeed, and on either side, at the distance of less than half a mile, rose crags, and precipices, and hills covered with pine, towering to the very sky, and forming, as it were, the impassable walls of the garden into which we were entering—for it was a garden. Up to the very foot of the rocks, and climbing up the hills, wherever a spot of vegetable mould was to be found, the highest cultivation was extended, and the most extraordinary verdure. The hay and the corn harvest were both in progress at the same time; and the new-mown fields appeared as if covered with rich green velvet, on which the large trees and rocks threw a beautiful transparent shadow. There were a thousand little objects of interest that filled up every spot the eye could rest upon, and satisfied it altogether. The valley all along was spotted with small villages, which seemed to creep for shelter close to the foot of the mountains. Not far on, stood a high rocky mound covered with the ruins of some feudal castle, and below lay a hamlet with its little church and the path winding up to it. Multitudes of small mountain bridges crossed the river all the way up its course, as it came dashing and foaming over a bed of rocks. The crags on either side were broken and interspersed with rich hanging wood, and kept narrowing in the distance, till they seemed to meet, precipice over precipice, with the high conical Pic du Midi rising purple above them all; and at the same time the warm sunshine, pouring over the hills, gave to all the farther parts of the valley a kind of luminous indistinctness. I cannot describe it! It was a congregation of the grandest and the most minute, the most opposite and the most harmonious beauties, that nature can produce!

After having staid some time to admire, we passed

on over a light, elegant little bridge, and followed an excellent road towards the Eaux Bonnes. In a valley which turns away to the left, lay the little town of Alurdi, scattered among some lesser hills. Part of it has been twice destroyed by avalanches, but the people still continue to build up their houses exactly on the same spot.

However grand the hills may appear, the eye, unaccustomed to such vast objects, does not judge rightly of their height till it compares them to something with which it is familiar. The steeple of Alurdi served us as a guide to estimate the objects around; and the effect was so extraordinary, that we both laughed on measuring it against the mountain behind. I am sure I know not why I laughed, for there is nothing in the littleness of man's works to make him merry; but so it was, and we went on.

Approaching Laruns, the valley appears terminated by high crags, and we could just distinguish the road to Spain, leading into a deep ravine, which seems scarcely more than a crevice in the rock. But here, turning off to the left, we passed through the town of Laruns itself, which is as odd a building as ever I beheld. Perhaps some people might find a great deal of amusement in searching into the history of the place, for both the materials and structure appear of an antique date. The lower story of the houses are only inhabited by the cows, pigs, and horses; and the number of pretty faces which the sound of a carriage called to stare at the travellers, seemed as if they were looking out of the drawing-room windows. The streets are so narrow, that it is scarcely possible to pass; neither did I see a shop of any kind in the place. Over many of the doors we remarked the form of a serpent interlaced with two bars of iron, and the windows, which were without glass, consisting only of a kind of Gothic frame of black marble, giving an extraordinary churchlike appearance to the houses.

After passing through Laruns, as we entered another long valley to the left, we turned to take one more look at that which we were quitting. It was quite fairy land, a perfect scene of enchantment. The valley, full of villages, hamlets, and cultivation, undulating in a thousand slopes, and broken by woods and rivers, was all lighted up by the clear rays of the declining sun; while the

wild heavy rocks and mountains to the west rose in deep masses against the sky, no longer separated into detached portions, but all confounded in profound shadow, and airy, uncertain obscurity.

Language is all emptiness, and fails before anything great or strong. Reader, I must take you to the Valley d'Ossau, and set you where I stood, and win the sun to shine upon it, as then he shone, before I can make you comprehend its loveliness.

We soon lost sight of it. After going on for a short time among some English-looking hedge lanes, we again came out upon the edge of the hill; the road passing along the brink of a steep descent, at the bottom of which ran the river roaring among the rocks. At one part, we found the people engaged in banking up the road, which was not upon the surest foundation possible, and which, having apparently a strong dislike to an elevated situation, was rather inclined to slip down into a more humble station in the valley below. The way taken, or rather the method in which they were proceeding to prop up the road, was somewhat curious. About twenty men and women were employed, some in digging earth for the embankment, others in carrying it to the spot. The machinery of a wheelbarrow never seemed to have entered their imagination, but as soon as a shovelful of earth was dug out, the women took it on their heads, in a small wooden trough, not at all unlike a butcher's tray, only not so large, and thus carried it at a slow pace to its destination, talking all the way; so that upon a fair calculation each woman could fill up about a cubic yard per diem.

It was not long now before we reached the Eaux Bonnes, a little town consisting of about a dozen large white houses, thrust into a gorge of the mountains. They are generally divided into small bedrooms, and fitted alone for lodging the greatest possible number of the strangers who come to drink the waters. In fact, it looks as if a bit of Hastings, or Tunbridge Wells, and that a bad bit too, had been exported to the Pyrenees. The well is highly sulphurous, tasting most disagreeably of bad eggs; but it is supposed to have the most extraordinary effect in the cure of consumptive complaints, and thus, either for fashion or health, there are a great many people who come to drink of its waters.

The morning after our arrival, I wandered down to a

cascade in the valley. I have seen much grander waterfalls, but rarely one more beautiful. By my eye, I should guess the height to be about forty feet. The scenery round is richly wooded, rocky, and picturesque, and the body of water considerable; but the principal effect is produced by the stream, after having fallen eight or ten feet, striking a projecting piece of a crag, and rising back again in foam and spray, almost to the same height as that from which it fell. It then again descends, rushing down over the rock, with a roar which is heard for a great distance. At particular times, the sun, finding a way for his beams across the woody screen that hides it from above, shines upon the foaming mist that always rises from the water, and arches it with a sunbow. But I am not sure that it is not more beautiful without, in the calm simplicity of the white stream, the dark rocks, and hanging wood.

THE EAUX CHAUDES.

On every nerve
The deadly winter seizes, shuts up ev'ry sense,
And o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows a stiffened corse,
Stretched out and bleaching in the northern blast.
THOMSON.

Blood horses do not suit precipices, I am very well aware of that; but the two beasts which they brought forth to carry us to the Eaux Chaudes were so tremendously irregular in appearance, so like the mountains they were destined to climb, that when I got across the ridge of my unfortunate hack, I could have fancied myself astride upon the Pic du Midi. However, they did very well, much better, in all probability, than better beasts would have done, and thus they went away, jogging on, lashing themselves with their tails, and kicking most unmercifully to get rid of the flies, but always with a kind of solemn gravity, which showed them well accustomed to it all, and neither at all inclined to decompose themselves or their riders. As we went on, returning on the path we had passed the day before, we saw all the world in the fields getting in the harvest, trotting up and down the mountains with their bare feet, and as gay as the larks that were singing over their heads. To bring home the hay, they gather it into large linen cloths, forming packages very like feather beds; these they roll down the hills as far as they can. When they cannot do so, they carry them, as they carry everything all through the mountains, on their heads; and difficult as the manœuvre may seem, we saw more than once a girl stoop down to drink at a well, satisfy her thirst, and rise again, without ever removing the immense load of hay she carried on her head.

We were soon again in the beautiful Valley d'Ossau, passed through Laruns, and following the road which I have said we saw going towards Spain, we entered a deep ravine, or pass in the mountains, where five men might dispute the passage with a world. There is not

more room than for three horses abreast, and the rocks around rise high, bare, and inaccessible. At the end of the pass, the river which we had lost appeared pouring out into a deep hollow covered with rocks, trees, and underwood, the ravine widened into a narrow valley, varying from two to six hundred yards wide, while stupendous mountains rose on every side and shut out the world. Here some pious soul has hollowed out a little chapel in the rock, where the traveller may turn in to pray; and there could scarcely be a spot more solemn. In these passes, too, the storms of the winter months are most tremendous, with hurricanes and whirlwinds of snow so dreadful, that it is a common saying, "Here let not the father expect his son, nor the son expect his father." I have been told that this proverb originated in the story of a youth who had gone to hunt the izzard in the valley of Héas, when one of these storms occurred. His father, alarmed for his safety, went out to seek him. The young man arrived with his game, but finding his father absent on his account, returned to look for and bring him back. It would appear that the son had found his parent almost overpowered by the storm, and, being strong and vigorous, had taken him in his arms to carry him home, for they were afterward found lying together buried in the snow.

After keeping for some way along the steep which overhangs the river to the right hand, we crossed a little bridge called *Le Pont Creusé*, and passed under the rocks to the left. It now becomes a country of cataracts, for every quarter of a mile a stream comes bursting over the top of the mountains, and descends from fall to fall for six or eight hundred feet. A very picturesque figure presented itself in our way; it was that of a Spanish smuggler, with his large sombrero, netted hair, and loaded mule; and I could not help remarking in his countenance a kind of wild independence which I had not seen among the French mountaineers. God knows how he came by it, whether from his race or his country, or the continual habit of encountering and conquering dangers and difficulties in his illicit traffic; but there was something fine and grand, though bad, in the expression, not only of his face, but figure.

Soon after passing him we arrived at the *Eaux Chaudes*, which consists simply of two ranges of houses built between the river and the mountain. The style of the

place is exactly like that of the Eaux Bonnes, but it possesses several different springs, although the general nature of the waters appeared to me much the same as those of the former fountains.

Near the Eaux Chaudes is a mountain, called *La Montagne de la Grotte*, from a famous cavern situated near its summit, whose extent cannot exactly be ascertained, on account of a stream which impedes the passage at about three hundred yards from the entrance.

At the village we made an agreement with a guide to conduct us to the grotto. He was a shrewd, intelligent fellow, and spoke tolerable French, a thing rather rare in that part of the country; but he had acquired also a very excellent notion of the method of cheating travellers, together with a true French estimation of English purses and gullibility. Let me here remark, that the inhabitants of the Pyrenees, as far as I have seen, have little of the simplicity of mountaineers. The season for drinking the mineral waters bringing a great influx of strangers to spots at other times almost deserted, has taught the people of the country to gain as much as they can, and make hay while the sun shines, by cheating all the travellers within their reach to the utmost, so that whoever is obliged to employ them had better make their bargain beforehand.

Our guide having furnished himself with the necessary candles, &c., we proceeded along the valley, and crossed a bridge called *Le Pont d'Enfer*. I know not why, but in all mountainous countries they seem fond of attributing some of their bridges to the devil. In Wales, in the Alps, in the Pyrenees, one half of them derive their names from that black personage, who, I should suppose, had something more serious to think about than building bridges. That which we now passed over had nothing very diabolical in its construction; and having again crossed the stream, our guide pointed out to us the grotto with a stream pouring down from it into the valley. It seemed a kind of garret window in the mountain, which itself was little less perpendicular than the side of a house. We were told, however, that we might ascend on horseback, and on putting it to the proof, found that which had appeared impracticable not only possible, but easy, rendered so by means of a zigzag path, which conducted by easy stages to the very mouth

of the grotto. Arrived there, we were obliged to stop to cool ourselves, for the air of the interior was actually freezing.

I have always been disappointed in grottoes and caverns; and this, like all the rest which I have seen, gratified me but little. It was a vast hole in the mountain, filled with large petrifications in a great variety of forms; one of which, descending from above in the shape of an elephant's trunk, kept pouring forth a heavy shower of water, forming pools, that emptied themselves into the river in the centre. It was altogether far more curious than beautiful; and whether it was that my mind was not in train to enjoy, or what, I know not, but I found little to interest and less to admire.

However, after having dined at the *Eaux Chaudes*, on passing through the deep ravine by which we had come, we had again new subject for pleasure, in the view down the lovely Valley d'Ossau. We returned to it with that feeling which man experiences on coming back to something loved, and we naturally called it *our valley*.

It was on the hills near the *Eaux Bonnes* that I first met with that luxuriance of flowers for which the Pyrenees are famous. The morning before our departure, I took a walk over the mountains to a cascade higher up in the valley than that which we had formerly seen, and in the course of an hour gathered more than forty different species of flowers, a great many of which I had rarely seen before. The butterflies were nearly as numerous, and as brilliant in colour, and I was almost tempted to catch some of them; but as I had no means of preserving them, to have done so would have been but useless cruelty.

We lingered for several days at the *Eaux Bonnes*, enjoying ourselves much; for it was one of those spots in which we can well live, "the world forgetting." Every morning offered some new expedition through beautiful scenery; and in wandering among the rocks and woods, by the side of the bright streams, and over the blue tops of those ancient mountains, a calm and placid thoughtfulness fell upon me, different in every respect both from the fits of dark gloom which had been so frequently my companions, and from the wild and reckless spirit of excitement, by conjuring up which, I strove at other times to gain assistance to wage my constant warfare against memory.

How long I might have remained there I do not know. had I not been driven thence by a return of my mental malady, which, though the fits were less frequent, more easily banished, and less painful in their effects, had never left me entirely. At Bordeaux I had suffered once or twice from the same delusion; and I only seemed to escape by constant occupation of mind and body.

In the present instance I had roamed out early one morning, and had climbed one of the highest mountains during the continuance of a fog, which I knew to be the forerunner of a bright summer day. I was alone; but I ascended the mountain side so far, as to have all the vapours below me, and to get the blue sky around me. The whole world below was covered with the fog, which lay condensed and even, like a calm wide ocean, while round about on every side, from the surface of the mist, rose innumerable the granite peaks of the mountains, offering the same aspect which doubtless they had done when they looked down, long centuries before, upon the universal deluge. It was an extraordinary scene, and I paused to gaze upon it long; but as the sun advanced, he dispelled the mists, and descending by the valley of the cascade, I stopped by the side of the falling water. After gazing upon it for a moment, I raised my eyes, when suddenly, through the spray of the fall and among the bushes on the other side, I saw again that fearful countenance. Covering my eyes with my hand, to shut it out, I hurried back to the inn, and told my friend B—— what had occurred.

“Let us return to Pau,” was his only reply, and we accordingly set out at once. My command over my mind, however, was now greater than it formerly had been; and ere we reached that place I had regained my calmness, and was prepared to act my allotted part with the rest.

THE FRIENDS.

Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns,
For happiness and true philosophy
Are of the social still and smiling kind.

THOMSON.

Our cook—yes, our cook—for we took it into our heads to keep house at Pau, and did not repent of it, for Therese behaved as well in our household as ever girl did; and besides other merits, could make fruit tarts and British dishes, having lived two years with the English family that I have said we met at Aire.

Our cook then, on our return from the Eaux Bonnes, was called upon for her accounts, inasmuch as cooks must eat and drink like other animals, and we had told her to provide herself with what she liked during our absence. Her bread and her wine formed a regular weekly bill apart, but further than that, her expenses amounted to—and she was as fine a fat rosy-cheeked lass as one would wish to see—amounted to the sum of three halfpence per diem. I could scarcely forbear laughing, but I did so for the good of society. If I had laughed she would have charged the next people twopence a day, as long as she lived, and rightly too, for surely no one would be economical and laughed at for their pains.

Two days after our first arrival in this little capital of the Basses Pyrenees, we strolled down into a valley below the town, and loitered along by the banks of the river; seeing several groups pass us, knowing no one, and known of none, and perhaps not wishing a little to place ourselves in the midst of some of them, and have our share of the conversation of Pau as well as the rest. At length, however, a party came near, and I began to have a strange undefined remembrance of the form of one of the persons composing it. I was not wrong, I had known her just before she left school; there was all the change from an interesting girl to a lovely young woman; but it was the same person, and she had not for-

gotten me either. We were kindly greeted, and quickly became no longer strange even with the rest of the party. To know them was to have the highest regard for them all. We were glad to seek their acquaintance, and acquaintance soon ripened into friendship. Within their little circle we found all that could be desired—talents, and grace, and cheerfulness, and nature, and in their society we had some of the happiest hours we met with on the Continent.

Whether my companion had told tales of my rhyming propensities, or whether I had been my own accuser, I forget : but I was soon called upon for verses and drawings. I agreed to contribute if others would do so too ; and we once more drew a magic circle round us, in which the spirit of poetry and romance rose up and whiled away many an hour at our bidding. Some of the pieces which I myself contributed I know were bad enough. I was sorry that I had written them ; but I now only remember one or two, the rest of the tales and anecdotes were given by others. The first thing of the kind which I shall transcribe was occasioned by a lady accusing me of having composed nothing for her—I asked for a subject, but she replied that I must choose one myself, she would give me “nothing.”

NOTHING.

“O quantum est in rebus inane !”

’Tis nothing all—our hopes, our fears,
Our pleasure’s smiles, our sorrow’s tears,
Our dreams of pride, our thoughts of care,
Are lighter, emptier than air.

’Tis nothing all—the splendid earth,
The boons of art’s, or nature’s birth,
With all that memory recalls,
From nothing rose—to nothing falls.

The emmet man toils on in vain
To monument his hours of pain,
While giant Time pursues his way,
And marks his footsteps with decay ;

Tracing on all that he destroys
The epitaph of man’s short joys,
The sentence of the great and small,
The certainty—’tis nothing all.

'Tis nothing all—the mighty man
Who conquer'd realms and worlds o'erran ;
What is he now ?—himself—his fame ?—
A heap of dust—an empty name.

Rome ! Rome ! where is the wealth, the power,
The pride of thy meridian hour,
Thy tyrant standard which, unfurl'd,
Waved o'er a tributary world ?

'Tis nothing all—and Cannæ's plain,
And Carthage' towers, and Leuctra's slain,
And all the deeds that deadless seem,
Are broken, like an idle dream.

Without the better hope that flows
From the pure skies o'er human woes,
Like sunset ere the night succeed,
All would be nothingness indeed.

And yet we love to leave behind
Some faint memorial to mankind,
A trace to fellow things of clay
Of something kindred past away.

And when Time's work is wrought on me
Some eye perchance these lines may see,
Without which, to the world and you,
My memory had been nothing too.

One of the families of which our little circle was now composed had passed some time in Brittany ; and among the first stories contributed was one by Colonel C—, under the awful title of, "Le Sorcier," preceded by some observations upon that province

LE SORCIER.

THE introduction of customs does much more to conquer a country than even an invading army. Lorraine, Alsace, and Franche Comté, were annexed to France by Louis the Fourteenth. By imparting to them the manners and habits of the French people, he soon rendered them easy under their new yoke; and fettering their minds by the chains of custom, he secured himself effectually against all danger of revolt. Not so in regard to Brittany. A decided fief of the crown of France, and long, by failure of male issue as well as alliance with the house of Bourbon, merged entirely into that kingdom, the inhabitants of the ancient dukedom of Bretagne still obstinately retained their old manners and customs, looking upon their barbarism as a sort of privilege, and repelling all attempt at improvement as a commencement of tyranny, and a first effort to deprive them of their liberties. If, as is very much the case, France in general is many years behind England in all the arts of life, Brittany is at least a century behind the rest of France, but more especially that part of the country called La Basse Bretagne. We must, of course, except the higher classes, the majority of whose members, by long association with the rest of the French nobility, have acquired the general manners of the country. There are, nevertheless, several families who, retired in the wilds of the land, retain, in some degree, the habits of their ancestors; but it is of the lower classes that I would speak at present. I saw but little of that part of the country, but I heard much of it from several persons who had frequented La Basse Bretagne, and as far as I have been able to learn, the inferior orders are characterized by few but good customs. Lazy, dirty, and slovenly in their persons and habitations, they possess corresponding qualities of mind; they are, I was assured, most frequently obstinate, ignorant, superstitious, and vindictive; yet at the same time are hardy, courageous, and resolute, opposing a sort of sullen, inert, unconquerable resistance to all attacks upon either their rights or prejudices. We read of a re-

fractory mule upon whom a lion was let loose, in the ducal menagerie at Florence, but who, retiring into a corner, received the monarch of the woods on his first attack with such a severe kick, that he was fain to forbear any further aggression upon so sullen an enemy. In this manner did the Bas Bretons receive Louis the Fourteenth, who would willingly have given them some degree of civilization : but they repelled all his efforts ; and every foot of the roads which he attempted to carry through the forests and wilds of that impregnable country, was actually cut at the point of the bayonet. If they have at all changed since that time, it has been by such very slow and imperceptible degrees, that the amelioration can scarcely be traced. They retain their own unseemly garb ; they speak nothing but their own inharmonious language, they wallow in their own indigenous dirt, and, I am told, transmit the itch as an heirloom from generation to generation. In many of their habits, they resemble the lower Irish ; but the comparison would be unfair to our Hibernian brethren.

The people of La Haute Bretagne are much more civilized, but still, in the lower ranks of life, are a very simple, ignorant, poor race, with many habits, and customs, and superstitions peculiar to themselves, which render them highly interesting to a traveller.

Having stated thus much, to give some slight idea of the people to whom I am about to introduce my hearers, I will proceed to tell an anecdote, the authenticity of which I can safely vouch for, as it occurred within my own immediate observation.

Every one has heard of the Whisperers of Ireland, who pretend to, and really possess, the extraordinary art of taming the wildest horses, which they apparently accomplish by the simple process of whispering in their ears. This faculty of whispering is not at all confined to Ireland, however, but is common, in different forms, to a great many other countries. Every one has heard of the Laplander's habit of whispering in the ear of his reindeer ; and in various parts of Brittany, several of these whisperers are to be met with, whose success is invariable. They are there called *Sorciers*, and generally exercise the trade of farriers, curing horses of a variety of diseases in a manner truly extraordinary. One time, being at the little village of Bècherel, we had an opportunity of seeing the skill of the sorcier put to the proof.

Our worthy host, Monsieur de G——, had shortly before purchased a beautiful horse, whose only defect appeared to be, that nobody could ride him; and we do believe that Alexander himself would have found no means of taming this Bucephalus. After having spent a whole morning, together with our host and his groom, in the vain endeavour to conquer the vicious spirit of the animal, our friend, Monsieur de G——, shrugged up his shoulders, with the usual gesture of a Frenchman when he is forced to have recourse to some unpleasant expedient. "*Il n'y a pas de remède,*" said he—"The horse must be sent to the sorcier;" and accordingly he gave orders to his *garçon d'écurie* to take it down the next morning to the village at which the aforesaid sorcier made his abode. This occasioned inquiries, the answers to which soon determined us not to allow the taming of the shrew to take place without our presence; and on the first expression of a wish to be on the spot at the time, our friend, whose hospitable kindness and desire to give us all kinds of information and pleasure during our visit to his house we shall not easily forget, instantly arranged a party for the next morning, in order to let us see the effect of the sorcier's power, in the first instance, and afterward shoot over the ground in our return to the *manoir*.

About six in the morning we set out, on horseback, for the dwelling of the sorcier, with a groom leading the horse in question, who remained quiet enough as long as no one attempted to mount him. However, after riding about six miles, as we came near the place of our destination, M. de G—— resolved to see whether the distance might not, in some degree, have quelled the spirit of the animal; and giving his own horse to the groom, he mounted the other, who let him fix himself very peaceably in the saddle, but at the moment our friend attempted to urge him forward, every muscle in his body seemed to be animated with rage. He reared, he plunged, he kicked, and left no means untried to shake his rider from his back. M. de G—— was a good horseman, and kept his seat: but he soon found that his situation was not a pleasant one, and attempted to dismount; but this the animal would not suffer either, rearing more tremendously than before, and showing a strong inclination to throw himself over on his master. Just at this moment, a short, sturdy little man, attracted

by the noise, came forth from the blacksmith's shop, towards which we had been apparently directing our steps, and approaching the spot, looked on for a moment as a spectator, merely exclaiming, *Le coquin!* At length, the groom, impatient of his apparent apathy, cried out, "Mais suffle donc, François! Il va tomber, je te dis."

"Does monsieur wish it?" demanded the sorcier, for such he was.

"Nom de Dieu!" cried the groom; "s'il le veut!"

As soon as he had said these words the sorcier watched his opportunity, and threw his arms round the horse's neck, who, not accustomed to such embraces, reared more violently than before, raising the little man off the ground with him. But he kept his hold, not at all embarrassed, and contrived, in that awkward situation, to fix his mouth upon the orifice of the animal's ear. What he did, we know not. No one can suppose that the mere breathing in the animal's ear could have any effect; but his hands were occupied holding tightly round his neck, and the only thing we could observe was that firm pressure of the mouth upon its ear. However, in a moment, the animal became less restiff, stood still, shivered a little, as with cold, and from that moment his spirit was gone.

Monsieur de G—— dismounted, paid the sorcier his ordinary fee, which was no more than a few francs, and after the excitement, and surprise, and all that sort of thing, had passed away, we took our guns and turned our steps homeward. It may well be supposed that our conversation for the rest of that day turned very much upon the sorcier; and, after several anecdotes of the same nature as the above, M. de G—— related the following:—

"Our curé," said he, "is a very excellent good man, but a little superstitious; and, about two years ago, hearing a great deal about this sorcier, and his feats of magic, he considered it his duty to preach against him; which he did so effectually, for more than one Sunday, that the poor blacksmith lost all his custom; and as the priest had taught the peasantry to consider him as somewhat worse than the devil, he might have starved, if a circumstance had not happened which delivered him from the anathema.

"Our good curé had saved from his stipend a few hundred francs, with which he determined to buy himself a

horse, to enable him to visit the farther parts of his extensive *cure* with less inconvenience. Accordingly, when the fair of Dinan came round, he set out, and, confident of his own judgment, bought himself a beast, which, doubtless, he imagined possessed all the qualities with which horse was ever indued. It was brought home the next day, and in the face of the whole parish the saddle was placed on his back, and the curé mounted.

"The horse stood stock still. The curé gave him a gentle cut with his whip. The beast did not budge. The priest then applied a smarter blow. The horse lashed out behind, and in a minute the curé was seen flying, like a black swan, into the pond before his own door, while the horse, as if quite satisfied with the exploit, stood as immovable as a stone, with his head down to his knees, and his ears bent back upon his neck.

"What could be done? the curé was not a man to try it again; and though he offered his horse a bargain to every one in the village, nobody would buy it. Day after day passed, and the horse stood in the stable, ate the curé's corn, and did nothing. More than once, the idea of applying to the sorcier occurred to the curé. At first he could not resolve upon such a thing, and many an argument did he hold with himself concerning the propriety of it. At length, however, the necessity of the case overcame his scruples, and he determined to send him to the sorcier: but how to do it, now became a serious question. He had preached so much against the practice that he was ashamed of yielding to it himself.

"At length, however, he took courage, and one dark night led the horse with his own hands all the way to the house we were at this morning. As soon as our friend François saw him, 'Ah, monsieur le curé,' said he, 'I thought you would come to me at last; but do you think I will cure your horse after you have ruined me?' The curé now tried all his eloquence, but the sorcier was as hard as a flint; however, at length he was somewhat moved.

"'Allons, monsieur le curé,' said he, 'I will make a bargain with you. You have preached me down when I could do you no good; you shall now preach me up—and I'll cure your horse.' This was a hard pill to swallow, and François would do nothing to gild it; but what

could the curé do? The priest could get on no longer without his horse, and the horse would not budge a step under the curé. So there was only one question asked; 'Has the devil anything to do in the matter?' 'Not a whit!' answered François; and the horse being left at the sorcier's for security, *on Sunday* we had a sermon completely clearing François from the accusation of dealing with the devil; and *on Monday* the curé was cantering all over the country."

"I will tell you a much more extraordinary story of a cure than that," exclaimed the colonel's brother, as soon as the tale of the sorcier was read. "It occurred in Brittany, too, under my own eyes also, while I lived at the house of an excellent Breton, a Doctor R——.

"Every one has heard of the mania for leeches which has lately prevailed in France. Like all other manias, this did not long confine itself to the capital or its environs, but rapidly spread to every province and every department; and like the blood which, impelled by the heart, finds its way to the most minute corners and remote extremities of the human frame, the doctrine of universal leechification gradually insinuated itself to the ultimate ends of his most Christian majesty's dominions. Not a canton so small but read the work of Monsieur Brousset; not a town so diminutive but had its regular consumption of leeches averaged among other articles of first necessity; not an apothecary's shop so insignificant but possessed its dozen or two of jars replete with these little black benefactors of humanity; and not a pond or a ditch where might not occasionally be seen some unfortunate wight up to his neck in the water, with a peculiar sort of net in his hand, endeavouring to entrap the aquatic practitioners to come and perform phlebotomy gratis. If a man had a pain in his head, he was ordered to apply leeches; if he had a pain in his toe, it was all the same thing. The gout, the apoplexy, a dropsy or a consumption; the headache, or the heartache, or the stomach ache, were all treated after the same fashion; and leeches were voted *nem. con.* the universal panacea applicable to every disease which afflicts poor little humanity. In short, the doctors were saved a great deal of trouble, the patients were probably none the worse, the apothecaries grew fat as well as the leeches, and

many a man made a fortune, who, if it had not been for his *sangsues*, would probably have been *sans sous*.

"At the time this practice was becoming general, my worthy friend and landlord, monsieur le docteur, was smitten with the desire of sucking his patient's blood—not personally, but by proxy; so that all the words that the French academy permit the nation to make use of, and which, when I left them, consisted of thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty one *and a half*,* the word most frequently in the mouth of monsieur le docteur was *sangsue*.

"But before I proceed further, I must briefly tell you what sort of a machine a French doctor in a country town is. It is a thing that walks upon two legs, or trots upon four, as occasion serves; that knows nothing of medicine, a good deal of surgery, and will go ten miles for two shillings. My worthy friend, then, Monsieur le Docteur —, resided at Quimper, in La Basse Bretagne. His fame was high, and not without cause, so that if a man fell off a tree and broke his neck within fifteen miles of Quimper, monsieur le docteur was sure to be in at the death.

"When last I was in Brittany, I spent six weeks very pleasantly with the doctor and his family, and, as he was a good horseman, and a pleasant companion, I accompanied him more than once when he rode to visit some country patients. Thus I was conducted one day to the little village of Kerethnac, some ten miles from Quimper, where my friend had plenty of occasions to exercise his curative propensities. One man had broken his leg, another had dislocated his wrist, and a third had a sore throat. To this last, without loss of time, the doctor ordered the application of twenty leeches, seemingly sorry that he could not prescribe them for the others also; and having despatched his business as quickly as possible, we remounted our horses and returned to Quimper. The road was a pleasant one, and two days after, when monsieur le docteur proposed to revisit Kerethnac, I was not unwilling to accompany him. On arriving at our journey's end, I went into all the huts with my friend. Huts they were, indeed, a combination of pig sty, cowhouse, and bedchamber. But to proceed.

* He afterward explained that he had been admitted once to the making of a new word by the French academy, and left it in the middle.

After having looked at the broken leg, and ordered some camphorated spirit for the dislocated wrist, the doctor entered the house of his sore-throated patient, the first piece of whose goods and chattels that presented itself being his wife.

"Well, my good woman," said the doctor, "how is your husband to-day?—better, no doubt."

"Oh yes, surely," answered the woman. "He is as well as ever, and gone to the field."

"I thought so," continued Monsieur le Docteur —. "The leeches have cured him! Wonderful effect they have! You got the leeches, of course."

"Oh yes, monsieur le docteur, they did him a deal of good, though he could not take them all."

"Take them all!" cried our friend. "Why, my good woman, how did you apply them?"

"Oh, I managed nicely," said the wife, looking quite contented with herself. "For variety's sake I boiled one half and made a fry of the other. The first he got down very well, but the second made him very sick. But what he took was quite enough," continued she, seeing some horror in the doctor's countenance, "for he was better the next morning, and to-day he is quite well."

"Umph!" said the doctor, with a sapient shake of the head. "If they have cured him that is sufficient; but they would have been better applied externally."

"The woman replied that she would do so the next time; and I doubt not, that if ever fate throws a score of unfortunate leeches into her power again, she will make a poultice of them."

"But there is no miracle in your story, my good brother," exclaimed the colonel, as the other concluded; "you vowed you would tell a much better story than mine. Now my friend's horse was cured by a whisper, your patient's sore throat by an emetic; the one was miraculous, the other nothing more than common."

"Oh, if you want a miracle," replied his brother, "you shall have one, and out of the same province also."

A MIRACLE.

"Prince Hohenloe, I mean the great miracle monger of Germany, has surely said enough and done enough to
VOL. II.—7 D

convince Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, that miracles are quite as easy nowadays as they were a thousand years ago, and that good Dame Nature has grown somewhat doting, and will let him do anything he likes with her. Now, I believe it thoroughly, for more reasons than one, and do not scruple to call all the world fools who disbelieve it. At all events, I am sure to have one half of the old women of Europe on my side; and besides, I can vouch the matter from ocular observation: that is to say, not that Prince Hohenloe commits miracles, but that even without him, they are as easy as ever—so easy, I am sure I could do one myself. But to my tale.

“There is a deep imbowering lane, not far from Cor-sieul, where the road winds slowly down between two high cliffy banks, till it comes to a low dell, through which flows one of the clearest streams I ever saw, so pure, so beautiful, the peasants have seemingly thought it next to sacrilege to hide it even by a bridge, and left it openly to traverse the road and wash your horse’s weary feet before he begins the long ascent of the opposite hill. Though steep and fatiguing, that road has still a peculiar sort of charm, which compensates the trouble of climbing to the top; and even were the ascent less difficult, one would be tempted to linger long in the sweet contemplative shade and silence that hangs about it. The rocky banks break into a thousand picturesque forms; and wherever a patch of vegetable earth has been able to fix itself, there has sprung up the richest verdure, varied by a thousand shrubs, and herbs, and flowers, honeysuckle, and eglantine, and sweetbriar, and the pure, large convolvulus, and the deep-blue pervanche, the lily of the fields, the hyacinth and the violet. Above, the trees hang as if planted in the air, and throw a green, soft shade across the rich tints of the road, except where a gleam of sunshine, breaking through, catches upon the salient points of the rock, and checkers the deep shadows of the leaves with a dancing light. The silence to the ear has the same effect as the shade to the eye; for there no sound is to be heard, except when some wild bird bursts into song amid the trees above, or when a low, sweet murmur rises up from the stream below. There is, as I have said, a magical charm in the whole, which compels one to linger in his progress; yet there is a reward in store for those who

climb to the top ; for suddenly the whole scene changes, and one of the most extensive prospects bursts upon the eye that can be conceived ; hills, and valleys, and villages, and woods, and streams, mingled in gay confusion, growing fainter and fainter in the distance, till the far ocean closes the whole, looking like a faint cloud upon the border of the sky, from which indeed it would scarcely be distinguished, did not the bold Mont St. Michael rise abruptly up, and catching all the rays of the sun, mark the limits of the horizon. In front, as a sort of foreground to the landscape, stands the little chapel of St. Anne, with a few houses surrounding it, and a group of trees sheltering it from the wind.

"I was one day riding to Corsieul with my friend, Monsieur R——, to see the curious Roman remains which have been found in that neighbourhood, when, as we mounted the hill, and came suddenly in sight of the chapel of St. Anne, we saw a vast variety of booths and tents, with a multitude of people—men, women, and children—in all their gay holyday attire, waiting round the chapel for the commencement of the mass. 'I had forgot that to-day is the fete of St. Anne,' said R—— 'would you like to see a miracle? There is one performed here every year.'

"'Above all things, let us see it,' replied I. So we dismounted, and went into the chapel. There was a great many people waiting about, to see (I suppose) if they could get a bit of miracle too ; but above all others, we remarked one old woman, with whom the saint had to deal more particularly. She seemed very poor, and very devout ; for, not being able to kneel, from her lameness, she sat before the shrine telling her beads, and praying as hard as she could ; while a young priest stood beside her to keep off the profane vulgar, being probably of opinion, with the copy line, that 'evil communications corrupt good manners.' However, we remarked that her dress was that of a remote canton, and we learned from the people round that she was a stranger, come from a great way to see what St. Anne would do for her. 'A prophet is no prophet in his own country,' says the old proverb ; and I rather think that saints take care not to practise their miracles upon their next-door neighbours. However, the mass commenced, and at the appointed place the old lady began to cry out. The priests swung their censers at her head, as if they would

have broken it ; and before the mass was over, the miracle was completed, and the lame woman firmly re-established on her legs.

“ We spent a very pleasant day at Corsieul, and before we returned, it was dark. In passing by the chapel of St. Anne, however, we saw all the tents and booths illuminated ; cider and *eau de vie* handing out in abundance ; and, in short, a complete fair, in honour of the miracle and the saint. Hearing the dulcet notes of a cracked fiddle in one of the tents, we dismounted and went in, when, to our surprise, we beheld the miraculous old lady dancing away as hard as she could, and doing *dos-à-dos* with a bumpkin of Corsieul. Now let those deny miracles that like—I saw this myself. I do not mean to say I saw that the woman was lame, but I will swear that she danced.”

Our next evening's contributions were of a more serious character, and the two first came from the pen of my excellent friend Colonel W——, whose long residence in India, though it had injured his health, and whitened the hair upon his brow, had not taken away one fine feeling or impaired one high principle.

THE REPROOF OF ALLI.

IN a country situated at the northern extremity of India, and upon the very verge of the delicious valley of Cashmere, which it rivalled in beauty and surpassed in luxury, lived Alli el Assur, the glory of his illustrious house. None of the Oolasses of Afghaunistan had ever produced so many great men; none had ever so glittered with treasure; none had ever so shone in arms, as the tribe of Assur. But the fame of his ancestors was to the glory of Alli as the pale light of the morning star, when the sun begins to beam upon the heavens. The day rose upon his splendour but to set upon his magnificence. Every hour saw his riches increase, and every hour saw his power extended.

But not for wealth alone was he famed; his wisdom and his knowledge were wafted to every quarter of the earth. The morning heard his words repeated in the east; the evening listened to his saying in the west: the southern star beheld his advice followed, and his counsels were borne on the wings of the north wind. For in the dawning of his youth, Alli had travelled over distant countries, and wandered among unknown people. Fringuistan had imparted to him all her arts; and all the wonders of Africa had been displayed before his eyes. He had conversed with the moolahs of all lands, and spoke the tongues of many nations.

And Alli knew that he was wise. The pride, of knowledge revelled in his heart, and he said, "There is no God, for I cannot see him, neither can mine ear hear his voice; and if there exists a Being governing the mighty universe with power and wisdom, why is evil permitted in the world? and why has he acted as he has done? It is against my reason to believe this thing, neither can my mind give it credit."

At five hours' journey from one of the palaces of Alli el Assur there dwelt a certain hermit, who was much revered for his wisdom and sanctity, and much loved for the mildness of his heart. He lived afar from the rest of his race, because he loved contemplation, not

that he loved not man : and in the solitude of the desert he waited for the angel of death.

And a desire entered into the heart of Alli to hear the words of the solitary : " For where is the learned man," exclaimed he, " with whom I have not conversed ? and where is there knowledge that I have not sought for it ? "

He mounted his horse while day was yet young in the sky, and, while the dew which evening had left still glittered undisturbed on the bosom of the flowers, proceeded, without attendant, to seek the place where the hermit made his abode. Nature was robed in her beauty, as a young bride, to meet the warm glances of the early sun : and the heart of Alli was glad, and expanded to the loveliness of the world. He directed his course by the river Hydaspes, that, like a golden lizard, drew along its mazy track, in the beams of the rising day. Its limpid waters seemed living in the rays, so full were they of motion and of music ; and the rays, like divers, seemed to dip through the transparent waves, and raise the bright pebbles from the bottom to the surface of the stream. The banks were covered with flowers ; and gay water lilies, like youthful maidens in their pride of beauty, danced upon the bending waves. All was at first fresh and delightful as the spring of early life ; but soon the sun rose high above the mountains, the birds retired to the shadow of the trees, the wild beasts couched in the deepest recesses of the jungle, and Alli grew weary and faint with the heat of noon. However, the river itself, as if tired of the glare of sunshine, led its waters into the gloom of the forest, and Alli, following its course, quickly heard the roaring voice of the cataract, and his heart was rejoiced, for the dwelling of the hermit looked upon the fall of the waters. The sound grew louder and louder, the trees fell away from the strife of the stream, and the river again appeared forcing its way between the high rocks, which, approaching gradually towards each other, constrained it to plunge furiously over the precipice into the valley below.

Sitting at the foot of the crags was an old man, whose white beard descended below his girdle. His dress was as simple as his heart was pure ; his form was stately and erect, and his eye beamed with the light of

a benevolent spirit. More than a hundred winters had shed their snows upon his head, and more than a hundred summers had led him to the brink of the grave: his look was fixed upon the mist which arose from the cataract: his mind was bent upon the cloud which hangs over eternity; and his soul was elevated with the thoughts of death.

Alli dismounted and saluted the man of years. "My son," said the hermit, "thou seemest fatigued with exercise, and exhausted with the heat. Enter into this cave, which is my dwelling; eat of the food which is prepared for the stranger; rest and refresh thyself; and when thy limbs have recovered their vigour, and thy mind is calmed by repose, come and we will hold communion of this world, and what is beyond."

Alli entered the cavern, and retired after a short space, and sitting down by the old man, he poured forth the thoughts of his bosom.

"How beautiful is nature!" said he; "how lovely in every season! how mild in spring! how gay in summer! how luxuriant in autumn! how grand in the winter storm! and yet to man the spring brings illness, the summer yields fatigue, the autumn demands his labour, and the winter sees his death! Miserable in the midst of perfection, desolate in the heart of plenty, and wretched is he, even in the moment of enjoyment. What is he but a mixture of clay rendered sensible to pain, and affections destined to be quelled in death? And yet this animated mass of earthly sorrow vainly pictures to himself a Being whom he calls all good, who sees his misery, yet will not alleviate it, and who gave him being but to render him unhappy. Can this thing be? No!—there is no God. It is but the monstrous imagination of man's own heart!"

"What is there," answered the old man, "that has not a cause? And if each thing has a cause, all must have a cause; and that which was the cause of all, must have power over all, must love all, and protect all that it caused. And what is man, the insect of an hour, that he should say, 'I cannot understand, therefore I will not believe?' Alli el Assur! (for by thy thoughts do I know thee,) listen to the words of experience—hearken to the voice of years—mark what I shall say to thee; for I am old, and thine own wisdom shall tell thee that my words are true.

"Know then, that at the bottom of the sea there is a certain animal, whose size is so minute, that ten of them would stand on the point of thy cimeter. This animal never stirs from the place of its birth; and the term of its life is shorter than the being of a butterfly. It so happened, that an insect of this kind fell, by chance, upon the back of one of those large amphibious creatures which sometimes betake themselves to land, and thus it was carried within sight of the dwelling of man. When it returned to its companions of the ocean, it related all the wonders it had seen, but found no one to believe.

" 'Thou tellest us,' said one, 'that there is a being on the earth whose size is immense, and whose faculties are so wonderful, that all nature is open to his view; whose vast sight could comprehend the whole of this rock; and, in short, whose senses are excellent in every particular: and yet thou sayst, that this being is stupid enough to move from place to place without being forced to do so; and has the excessive folly to live on the land instead of dwelling in the sea, the natural element of all creatures existing. But granting even all that to be true, thou hast also said that this great being builds himself a shell to creep into. Now, were he endowed with the powers you describe, he would of course sit still at ease in one place, and enjoy the fluid that circulates round him as we do. In this, as well as in a thousand other points, thy story is improbable and inconsistent, nor can we believe it, for our senses tell us it is not true.'

" 'My friend,' replied the travelled insect, 'attempt not to scan the actions of a being above thy comprehension, nor measure his power by thy own littleness. Neither tell me that this being is not, because thy mind is too confined to reconcile his deeds to thy own ideas.'

" 'Man! man! vain man!' continued the hermit, 'how much less art thou in comparison to the most high God, than is that insect in comparison to thee! Measure thyself by that mountain. Art thou not small? Yea, as a worm. How petty is the part which that mountain forms in the bulk of the earth. That great earth, on which thou art but an atom, is little to many of the planets; it is insignificant to the sun; it is as a grain of dust among the millions of orbs, which even thy limited sight can behold in the firmament; and what is it to the

immensity of eternal space !* Look at that grain of sand : canst thou tell me its fabric ! canst thou separate its parts ! No ! stretch thine ambitious soul ; try to grasp the idea of infinity of time, of space, of matter. Thou canst do neither. And wilt thou, who canst not comprehend either the greatest or the least, wilt thou measure the actions of Omnipotence by the standard of thine own littleness, and deny his power, because thou dost not understand its operations !

“No, Alli el Assur, return to thine own dwelling, and be wise enough to know, that the wisdom of the wisest is, to the works of the Almighty, but as a drop of water to the ocean, ay, to an ocean of oceans : and henceforward, never deny because thou canst not comprehend ; but learn, that with all thy knowledge thou knowest nothing.”

* My worthy friend maintains that our knowledge of astronomy is very inferior to that possessed by the ancient tribes of Asia.

THE VISIONS OF HASSAN.

THE day faded into twilight; the flowers ceased to look upon the sun: the bulbul poured his notes of melody unto the star of the evening; and sleep stole over the sorrows and weariness of the universe. But while the eyes of a world were closed, Hassan the destitute woke to grief, and meditated on despair.

"This morning," exclaimed he, "I was great among the greatest, a prince among princes, an eagle on a rock; but midday saw me in the hands of mine enemies, as a gazelle struck by the falcon; and evening beholds me as a wandering star, as the genii torch which is hurled into the vacancy of night: cast down from my throne, exiled from my land, wandering, I know not whither. Oh Allah! Allah! great is thy wisdom, and merciful thy providence; suffer not my heart to blaspheme, nor my soul to doubt that thou art the highest." Thus saying, Hassan cast himself upon the earth, and groaned in the bitterness of his misery. While he lay thus prostrate and grovelling, like a slave upon the ground, he heard a voice, like thunder, echoing through the mountain.

"Hassan!" said a voice, "weak child of clay, humbled in thy career of pride, dost thou murmur that God hath chastised thee? Now look into the valley before thee, and say, what dost thou see?"

Hassan raised his head and looked into the valley. "I see," replied he, "a great stream, and there is a cloud at its source, and a whirlpool at its conclusion, so that I see not from whence it comes, neither behold I whereunto it goeth."

"That," said the voice, "is the stream of life. The cloud is the time of man's birth. Beyond is the eternity past. The whirlpool is the time of man's death, and beyond is the eternity to come. All must float from the one to the other, and what man shall say that his lot is harder than another; for death is a cup of which all must taste, and life is a trial which all must endure. Therefore is God good from the beginning even unto the end. Now bow down thy head unto the earth, give

praise unto Allah, and then look into the valley once more."

Hassan did as the voice commanded.

"And now what seest thou?" said the voice.

"I see," answered Hassan, "a cottage and a palace; and there is above them both a fearful storm of lightning and thunder; and, lo! the bolt strikes the palace, and the cottage is untouched."

"That palace," said the voice, "is prosperity, and that cottage is adversity. The lightning strikes the proud and passes by the humble, and glory is due to God, for his name is The Impartial. And again, what dost thou behold?"

"I see," said Hassan, "a large nest upon a high place, and in it there lies a young bird. A fox approaches the nest, and the young bird is destroyed; and now behold an eagle drops upon the fox, and it also is no more."

"Thou shalt not hurt the smallest," said the voice, "lest the greatest frown upon thee; nor shalt thou injure the weakest, for the strongest beholds thine actions; and glory is due to God, for his justice is retributive. Now bow down thine head and pray, that thou mayst be able to endure." And Hassan prayed. "Once more, what dost thou behold?"

"It is my capital city in flames," said Hassan, with a firm voice; "and I see my palace crumbling in the fire, and I see a woman striving to escape;" and the voice of Hassan became weak, as with great fear. "Oh Allah! save her!" cried he; "it is her I have injured! it is Zelekah! it is my beloved!" and he started forward to snatch her from the flames; but as he was about to plunge over the edge of the precipice, his arm was caught by one behind him. The vision passed away, and the valley once more relapsed into the darkness of night.

Hassan turned round, and by the trembling light of the stars beheld a man of venerable years and benevolent deportment. Hassan was about to speak, but the old man commanded him to listen; and Hassan instantly remembered the voice he had before heard.

"Listen unto me," said the old man, "for what thou hast seen is all a vision. Thy capital city sleeps in peace; but it is no longer thine. Thy palace still stands in its strength; but thou art an exile from its walls.

Thy Zelekah lives secure; but thou hast lost her by thine own passions. I am thy good genius, and hadst thou before listened to my voice, thou wouldst have been even now the lord of a fair land; the master of a willing people; the bridegroom of thy beloved. When thou soughtest first the love of Zelekah, the cottage girl, did not a voice remind thee, that thou hadst vowed to wed the daughter of the calif, and none but her; and did it not whisper, that though without vice thou mightst sacrifice thine ambition to thy passion, it was criminal to break thine oath, and dishonourable to forget thy promise; and when thou didst carry away by force the girl that loved thee well, but loved virtue better, did not the same voice say, 'Thou art acting wrong; thou art misusing the power of a prince; thou art violating the rights of thy people.' Man, man! must thy good genius ever speak in thunder to make thee hear?"

Hassan hid his eyes with his hands, and the geni went on.

"Thou art punished by the loss of thy throne; thou art punished by the loss of thy beloved: but still more shalt thou be punished by hearing that Zelekah, the cottage girl, was the daughter of the calif—was thy promised bride—whom the wisdom of her father had absented from the too great splendour of his court."

"Allah! Allah!" cried Hassan; "deeply, but justly, hast thou chastised my wickedness."

"There is peace," said the geni, "in repentance. It is still in thy power to retrieve thy fortunes, and thou shalt ever be wiser from thy sorrows. Go, and remember, that when thou thinkest thyself most alone, then is the eye of God upon thee, and that every bad deed incurreth the wrath of him, to whom the greatest sovereign of the earth is but as a worm, yea, less than the meanest of insects. That God himself is good, and by no means will he endure evil."

Hassan cast himself at the feet of the geni; but when he raised his eyes, the old man was no longer there, and he found himself lonely on the brink of the precipice; but nevertheless his heart was much lightened, and his mind was calm; and instead of yielding to despair, he now prepared for whatever fortune could inflict, or constancy endure; and laying himself down, sleep came over his eyes, and lulled the sorrows of his heart.

The morning was bright in the east; the sunbeams

wandered over the hills; the flowers perfumed the early breeze; the woods were melodious with the warbling of the birds; and creation was animated with the wakening hum of life; when Hassan woke from his slumber, chastened by adversity, and strengthened by repose. "When," said he, "when have I, on the glittering alcove, resting on softness and surrounded by luxury, when have I tasted of calm so unbroken, and sleep so grateful, as on this barren rock, unguarded by any but by Providence, and unseen but by the eye of the Almighty." And kneeling towards Mecca, he said the prayer of the morning. When he had concluded, he rose, and descended into the valley below, by a narrow path which wound round the side of the mountain.

At the bottom of the hill, surrounded by tall palm trees, rose a spring of clear water, pouring music and freshness upon the air around; and as he drew nigh, Hassan beheld the form of a woman bending over the fountain, and a strange feeling came over his heart, a mingling of joy and fear; for he felt as one that comes back to the home of his fathers, and knows not what tidings shall greet his return. But as he drew near, he saw a leopard couching among the trees, and prepared to spring upon the girl beside the fountain. Now the heart of Hassan was as the heart of a lion, calm, and without fear; and drawing his cimeter, he smote the wild beast and drove him forth, wounded and howling to the woods; and turning towards her he had saved, as his mind had presaged, he beheld the light of his soul.

Zelekah extended her arms towards him.

"Oh, Hassan!" cried she; "and have I then found thee?"

Hassan pressed her to his heart.

"Did Zelekah seek for him that had wronged her?" he asked; "could she still love the tyrant who tore her against her will from the humble habitations of peace, and the lowly mansions of uninterrupted quiet?"

Zelekah answered not, but her silence had a voice, and Hassan's heart was glad.

"Oh, Zelekah!" said he, "I have learned by my follies and my punishment, what experience will teach to all men, that adversity may try the body, but that our soul is tried by prosperity. I have failed in the ordeal, and am unworthy to enjoy the advantages which my own deeds have forfeited, and which the hand of justice

has withdrawn ; but still if thy love remain, Hassan is happier as an exile than as a prince. Come, let us retire to some humble spot ; far from cities and from man's resort, where we may live with peace the number of our days ; and when Azrael shall knock at our gate, we shall meet the angel of death with resignation." And Hassan and Zelekah fled from the world, and found peace in solitude.

Time flew away with his silent wings, changing the face of the world ; and a heavy war vexed the kingdom from which Hassan had been driven. The people remembered him with regret, and began to ask among themselves, " Why have we not Hassan, who led us on to victory ; on whose cimeter sat the death of our enemies ? Hassan the strong arm of war—the mighty man in the battle—the prince that we have chosen is slain, and our foes rejoice in our defeat. Why have we not Hassan to deliver us from our enemies ?"

And Hassan heard the tidings ; and baring his arm, he flew to the battle, and smote the enemies of the land : and the people rejoicing, seated him gladly on his throne. Zelekah shared his joy, as she had shared his sorrow ; and peace and abundance dwelt in the land, and justice and mercy stood on each side of the throne : for Hassan never forgot his vision on the mountain, and remembered that God is good, great, and impartial ; and that evil will by no means be endured by the Almighty.

After such efforts to amuse and instruct as these on the part of one so much more entitled to repose than ourselves, neither I nor the friend who was with me could refuse to do our best in some more laboured composition than a few verses, and by the third night after we had produced the two tales which follow.

THE STORY OF AZIMANTIUM

We are weary of the present—let us turn and rest our minds for a while upon a tale of the past.

THERE was a dreamy stillness in the air—there was a golden glory over the sky—there was a music in the far-off hum of distant nature sinking to repose—there was a fragrance in the soft breath of the valley, as it stole timidly through the multitude of drowsy flowers, as if afraid to wake them from their evening sleep; all told of one of those few days which last in loveliness from their dawning to their close—so full of every fine essence of joy, that we tremble to see them pass, lest we should never find anything so beautiful upon earth again. The whispering murmur of the small long waves, as they wooed the quiet sands upon the seashore—the pale and timid lustre of the stars, as they shone out, one by one, through the still purple heaven—the slow changes of a rosy cloud, as it dallied with an unseen wind—spoke peace! Peace, the first, last, great blessing—the mightiest of promises—the object of virtue, of wisdom, of knowledge—the only desire that experience leaves—the hope beyond our life—the glory of eternity—peace!

High eyried on the rocky eminence, where now the overthrown stones of a massy wall tell of cities and their dwellers, passed like shadows down the dim vista of the gone, stood the fair town of Azimantium, with its long-disused battlements, its temples, and its columns, marked in fine lines of shadowy purple, high upon the broad expanse of the rich evening sky. The mountain on which it stood, clothed in the splendid robe of the setting day's calm violet colour, hung over the valleys and the plains around, with an air of protecting majesty. On one side a gentle slope, covered with green pastures and clumps of high trees, with ever and anon a temple or a villa in their shade, declined softly towards the fair land of Greece—the country of poetry and song—to which Azimantium had long belonged. Two other sides, that towards the Euxine,* and that which looked over

* See Procopius *de Edificiis*, l. iv. chap. xi. Several reasons have induced me to place Azimantium on the very shores of the Euxine.

Thrace, were rough and steep, broken with gigantic crags; and though many a piece of smooth short turf intervened between the masses of cold gray stone—though many a tree waved its leafy arms, as if in sport, above each rugged cliff, and many a green parasite trailed its fantastic garlanding of verdure over the harsh and stony limbs of the mountain—no footing was there for things of mortal mould. The goat, the sure-footed goat, looked down, with sidelong glance, from the flat summit above, but tempted not the descent; the fox earthed himself at the foot; and but the eagle, of all living things, in his kingly loneliness, chose it for his dwelling, from its very solitude. The fourth side turned towards the barbarian enemies of the Grecian name, and frowned defiance in one savage, dark, unbroken precipice.

But now all was peace around. Splendour, and feasting, and music reigned through the Grecian empire. The brow of every man was calm and joyful, the voice of every one was rich in poetry and song; and it would have seemed that nothing but a smile had ever curled the lip, or danced in the eye. Oh fatal softness! oh hard lot of man! that peace can never rest without power! that enjoyment can never continue without strength! that the shield, and the glaive, and the javelin should be the only safeguards of tranquillity!

All was peace. Many a century of decaying years had swept over the proud fabric of the Roman Empire, and what had been mighty was now hastening towards a name. The men who had conquered a world, mouldered in the dust; and their children were contented to enjoy. The arms which should have wielded the sword, or braced on the shield, now only raised the cup, or struck the lyre. Voices which, in former days, would have breathed the soul of freedom to the swelling hearts of a mighty people, or pleaded for the laws before that senate which should have been immortal, now sang the loose and ribald song, in the halls of luxury and the resorts of intemperance, or urged some vain and subtle theme, in schools that had become schools of folly. Honour was no longer to the brave, or to the good; and, though peace spread over the whole Eastern realm, it was peace bought by tributary gold, won by degradation, and spent in effeminacy, indulgence, and vice.

One small city alone of the whole empire still held

within its walls the nobler spirit of Rome's ancient days. One small city alone, like an altar to some sublime but nearly forgotten deity, upheld the flame of virtuous courage—simple, grand, noble, independent—enjoyed the smile of peace, but feared not the frown of war, reposed without softness, and rejoiced without debauchery. That city was Azimantium. Its youth, trained to the nobler amusements, only descended from the free mountain air of their sky-surrounded dwelling, to war with the wild beasts of the forests around, or to chase the swift deer over the Thracian plains. Such were their sports of peace; and if a lingering influence of the genius-breathing climate taught the Pentelican marble to start into life, woke the Achaian flute, or struck the Teian lyre, the godlike spirit of a purer age gave fire to the song and vigour to the statue.

The mighty and majestic scenes amid which they beat, raised and dignified the hearts of Azimantium; and though the passions of humanity were there in all their force, the better soul, the nobler purpose of the mind, linked those passions to all that is grand and dignified in nature. The aspirations of the spirit, and the desires of the body, were not waging the horrific struggle mutually to destroy each other; but, joined together in thrilling fellowship, like the immortal twins of Laconia, they strove alone to guide and elevate each other. Love dwelt in Azimantium; but it was that brighter love, wherein the radiant share of the deathless soul invests the earthly portion with a blaze of light.

I have said that it was the evening of a summer day—a day such as is hardly known to more northern climates—a day on which the kingly charioteer of heaven seems to hold some high festival, and robe himself in more majestic lustre. The sunshine had passed, and it was evening—but an evening full of rays. It seemed as if some mysterious power had robbed the daylight of half its beams, to weave them into purple with the dark-blue woof of night, and then had studded it over with golden stars, to curtain the cradle of the sleeping earth.

Through the still calm valleys at the foot of the mountain of Azimantium—by the side of the living stream that sparkled onward on its brief gay course—amid tall and scattered trees, where the nightingale raised his glorious anthem to the first star—wandered two of the children of that city, who had seen no other dwelling, and never

desired to do so. They had risen from infancy in scenes which had every day grown dearer; and as years had flown, mutual love, uncrossed, unopposed, untainted, had given those scenes a light, whose spring was in their own hearts, a charm wrought by that potent magician, Affection. They loved as fully as mortal things can love; and from all external nature, from every song, from every sight, a sweet communion of thrilling enjoyments gathered itself round their mutual hearts. The memory of all their past was together; the joy of the present was tasted together; the future—misty and vague as that dimprofound must ever be—they never dreamed could be otherwise than, together. One month had yet to fly ere the dearest, because the most durable, tie was to bind Honoria and Menenius for ever; and now they wandered alone through those sweet valleys, and amid those soft scenes, unwatched, undoubted, by those whose duty was to guard and protect, because there was not one heart within the bounds of the city who dared to think that Honoria was unsafe with Menenius.

They talked of love and hope; and those bright visions that, in the summer morning of our youth, dance before our dazzled and untaught eyes, came thick upon them: and they lent each other willing aid to raise fabric after fabric, out of thin air alone, till the unsubstantial architecture reached to the very sky. Oh how they dreamed! and though a sultry and unnerving air grew up, one knew not whence, casting a sort of doubtful faintness on Honoria's frame; and though vague rumours of dangers to the state, and new demands from the pensioned enemies of the Eastern Empire, had reached the ears of Menenius, an atmosphere of their own hope surrounded them, in which joy seemed to breathe secure.

They had wandered long, pouring their souls into each other's bosom, till at length they turned to mount the gentle ascent that led them to their home. And yet they lingered, and yet they paused to take another look over the twilight world which spread out beneath, wider and wider at every step as they ascended; and to say, "How fair!" and still to speak one kind word more. As thus they paused beneath a group of tall trees, near which an ancient tower marked the burial place of the great of other days, and stretched their eyes over the darkening landscape, a sudden feeling of terror shot through Honoria's breast—she knew not why. She heard nothing.

she felt nothing, she saw nothing, which could awaken fear, and yet with a sudden and instinctive impulse she clung to Menenius, exclaiming, "What is coming?"

The horses that were feeding on the slope, with a shrill cry broke in madness down the hill; an eagle started from the rock below, and screaming, soared into the sky; while the lover cast his strong arm round her he loved, and unconsciously laid his hand upon his sword. All felt the dreadful coming of some great change.

It came—with a roar like the accumulated thunder of a thousand storms! The lightning, bursting from no visible cloud, swept over the clear blue sky, and shone among the stars; and in the livid blaze, the towers of Azimantium, with each line dark and clear on the broad glare, were seen to quiver, and rock, and fall; while, beneath the lover's feet, the earth heaved and panted, as if the globe were rent with dying agonies. The air was one wild scream—the sky, from pole to pole, was all on fire—the ground refused its footing. Then came a moment of dead calm. All was silent! all was still! and Menenius felt Honoria's arms relax the terrified clasp in which they held him. "It is over, beloved," whispered he, as if to break the restored tranquillity even by his voice—"it is over; thank God, the earthquake has passed by!"

But before the words were well pronounced, a fitful gleam, a broader flash, another roar, swept through the air; the ground yawned and quivered; the tottering tower beside them was hurled in crashing ruins over the brink. Menenius caught at a tree for support; but it too, shaking like a willow bough in a storm, swayed to and fro, and staggered as if plucked up by some gigantic force. Its boughs crashed; its centuried roots gave way, and rushing on those who had sought support in its strength, it overwhelmed them in its descent. What was the lover's only thought as he fell? To save her he loved; and by a sudden, scarcely conscious effort of all his natural vigour, he kept her off, while the uprooted tree was dashed upon himself.

* * * * *

The earthquake had passed by, and become a thing of memory. Nineteen of the towers of Constantinople had fallen; the walls of Azimantium lay broken and de-

stroyed; and on the day which was to have lighted the marriage torch for Honoria and Menenius, the lover lay, slowly recovering from the evening of the earthquake, and the beautiful girl watched him with glad yet anxious eyes. The father of Menenius, too, stood beside him, and marked the reviving glow in his son's cheek with joy, although there was a deep and thoughtful shadow on his brow, which brightened into something of triumph and of hope, as his eye ran over the bold and swelling muscles of his frame, and thought that but a few days more would restore that frame to all its pristine vigour. The triumph and the hope were those of a true son of ancient Greece, for they were kindled and inspired by the proud thought that the energetic strength of mind and body which were no longer united in himself, would, in his son, prove the safeguard of his country.

He had news to tell which might well have quelled the feeble spirits of that degenerate age, but Menenius was a child of Azimantium, and knew not fear, even though crushed, and sick, and wounded. He had borne the cautions of the leech, and the restraint of a sick chamber, with somewhat of impatience and disdain; but when his father told him that the false Bishop of Margus had opened the gates of that city to the barbarian Attila, the destroyer of arts, the waster of empires, the scourge of God; that unnumbered myriads of the Huns were pouring over the frontier barriers of the Eastern Empire; that Sirnium and Sardica, Ratiaria and Naissus, had fallen, and that but a few days more would see the blood-gorged savages beneath the rocks of Azimantium, Menenius became docile as a lamb to all that might hasten his recovery.

Honoria's cheek grew pale, and her lip forgot its smile, but not a word of fear was breathed upon the air, and her dark, dark eye shot out rays of more intense and brilliant light, as she gazed on each piece of her lover's armour, and scanned them jealously for fault or flaw.

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There was a cry through the whole of Greece, "They come! they come!" Over the fields, through the valleys, on the mountains; from voice to voice, and castle to castle, and city to city, the cry went forth, "Death to

the nations! They come! They come! Vultures, prepare to feast! They come! They come!"

All fell down before them or fled, and those who timidly spoke but the name of war, died by their own hearths. Fortress after fortress, town after town, was attacked and taken, and plundered and destroyed; not one stone was left upon another, and captivity and the sword shared the children of the land between them; and still went on the cry, "They come! They come! Vultures, prepare! They come! They come!"

The weak luxurious Romans of that degenerate day knew not the very arms with which to oppose their barbarous enemies. What did the song avail them! What the dance? What the wine cup and the feast! Could the soft-tongued sophist cheat the dark Hun from his destined prey? Or the skilful lawyer show Attila the code which forbade the strong to plunder and subject the weak? No, no! After three disgraceful scenes of defeat, all fled, or yielded, or died, or were made slaves, and the whole land was red with flaming cities and with bloodstained fields.

At length, the watchers on the steep of Azimantium beheld a dim cloud sweeping over the distant prospect, so vast, so mighty, that the whole land seemed teeming with a fearful birth. "They come! They come!" was all the cry. "They come! They come! The myriads of the North! Warrior, prepare your swords! They come! They come!"

On they swept, like the wind of the desert. The ruined walls of Azimantium, rifted by the earthquake, offered nothing to oppose their progress. Three sides, indeed, were defended by Nature herself, but the fourth was free, and up the soft slope they rushed, tribe upon tribe, nation upon nation, flushed with conquest, hardened to massacre, eager for spoil, contemptuous of danger and death.

Across the narrowest part of the approach—where the steep natural rock on one side, and the chasm left by the overthrown tower on the other, impeded all passage but by the smooth ascent—in long bright line, with casque, and buckler, and blade, stood the youth of Azimantium, between their dear familiar homes and the dark enemy. On rushed the Huns, with glad eyes gleaming in the fierce thirst for blood. The horsemen came first, their harness loaded with the golden ornaments of plundered cities, and hanging at each knee the bleeding head

of a fresh-slain Greek, while myriads of foot swarmed up behind them, so that, to the eyes above, the whole steep appeared alive with a dark mass of rushing enemies. An ocean of grim faces was raised to the devoted city, and glared upon the young band of Azimantines, as the first prepared sacrifice to the god of victory.

Nearer and more near they came. Forth flew the Scythian javelins, and, repelled from a thousand shields, turned innocent away, and then, the gazers from the house tops of Azimantium might see the closer fight engaged. The unbroken line of gallant champions still maintained the strife against the swelling multitude that rushed like a tremendous sea upon them. Barbarian after barbarian fell stricken from his horse, and still they saw the battle rage, and swarms of fresh enemies pour up to the assault. Still waved the swords, still advanced the spears, and still the bands of Azimantium held their narrow pass, while behind them stood the old men of the town, to encourage them by the presence of their fathers—to carry them fresh arms—to bear away the dead.

But oh what a sight it was, when first the gazers beheld four of the parents separate from the rest of the wavering crowd, and, bearing a heavy burden, come back towards the city! Oh with what terrified speed did mothers, and sisters, and wives, and the beloved, rush forth to meet the ghastly spectacle, and learn the dreadful truth! And oh, how they crowded round, when the old men laid down their load, and, the cloak cast back, showed the fair boy stricken in his spring of beauty, the red blood clotted in his golden hair, the energy of being passed from his young eyes, and the "pale flag of death advanced" where joy of life had reigned.

His sister wrung her hands, and tore her hair, and wept, but his mother gazed calmly, proudly, painfully, upon the clay. Then bending down to take one kiss of his cold cheek, "Weep not," she cried, "weep not, Eudocia, for your brother! He, the first, died for his country! My child is in heaven!"

"They come! They come!" was shouted from below. "Fly to the altars! Lo, they come! they come!" and breaking through the line of brave defenders, on rushed a body of the Huns. On, up the steep they urged their horses, reeking with blood and battle—on, on, to—

wards the city. The women fled to the churches and to the shrines, but there was none to defend the town; the streets were vacant; the youths and the old men had alike gone forth to the battle; the Huns were at the gate, and all seemed lost.

It was then that Menenius, red from the brow to the heel with the blood of his enemies, shouted to his brave companions to follow him, and hurling a gigantic Scythian down the steep, with one bound he passed the chasm, and lighted on a point of rock where the foot of man had never stood before—another brought him to a higher crag, whence a small green ridge ran round the steepest of the precipice under the city walls.

One after another his bravest comrades followed. Some missed their footing, and were dashed to atoms on the rocks below; but still another and another succeeded, for Azimantium knew not fear. The Huns were on their threshold, and who dared hesitate? A hundred of the most agile passed the depth, pursued the green path, cleared another and another spring, reached the city wall, climbed over its ruined stones, and in the narrow entrance street met the victorious Huns, who had paused to plunder the first shrine they found.

No words were spoken: nor javelins nor arrows were now used: brow to brow, and sword to sword, the struggle was renewed. But who can conquer men who combat for their hearths? The Huns fell, died, or were driven back, for that narrow way had no outlet but by the gate through which they had entered, and the close street where fought the youth of Azimantium. Not a Grecian glaive fell in vain, and at every step Menenius trod upon a slain barbarian. Like a reaper; each sweep of his unceasing arm made a hollow vacancy in the rank before him, and death grew so fearfully busy among the Huns, that vague imaginings of some supernatural power being armed to their encounter, took possession of their bosoms. The form of the young hero swelled to the eyes of their fancy. "It is a god!" they cried; "it is a god!" They shrank from his blows—they turned—they fled. Those who were behind knew not the cause of terror, but caught it as it came. Each saw his fellow flying, and, touched by the same dim unnerving influence, sought but to fly. "A god! a god!" they cried, and rushed forth tumultuously on those who followed towards the city.

The broken line of Azimantium through which they had forced their way, now divided into two by the barbarian multitude, still waged terrific warfare on either side, while Menenius, pressing on with his companions, drove the ferocious Huns from the gate. The contagious terror of the fugitives spread to those without, and all were hurrying down the descent, when one chief rushed through the struggling crowd. "A god?" he cried. "This hand shall try his immortality!" And on he urged his steed against Menenius.

For an instant the Greeks paused in their pursuit, and the barbarians rallied from their flight, and all eyes turned upon the Hun and his opponent. The fate of Azimantium—the last relic of Grecian and of Roman glory hung upon that brief moment. An instant decided all, for before fear could become hope in the hearts of the Huns, the charger of the barbarian chief was wild upon the plain, and he himself, cleft to the jaws, lay motionless before Menenius. A thousand souls seemed in the hero's bosom, and plunging into the midst of the enemies, he drove them down the steep. All Azimantium followed, and their footsteps were upon the necks of the dying. The rout was complete, and terror and dismay hung upon the flank of the defeated Huns; but still Menenius urged the furious pursuit. On, on he cleft his way. He marked not, he saw not, who was near, he heeded not, he felt not what opposed him. His eye was fixed upon a white and fluttering object which was borne along amid the brown masses of the flying barbarians, and towards it he rent his way, while his unwearied arm smote down all things that impeded his progress, as if but to make his path to that.

As long as the rout and the pursuit were confined by the narrow sides of the ascent to Azimantium, he kept that one spot in view; but afterward, when the path of the flyers opened out upon the plains, the horse which bore it carried it away from his straining eyes, while the gray falling of the evening gave every distant thing a vague, shadowy, uncertain form, like the objects of the past seen through the twilight memory of many years. He followed it to the last—night fell, and it was lost.

With triumph and with song the children of Azimantium wound up towards the city. Joy! joy! joy! was in their hearts, and victory upon their brows. They had overcome the myriads, they had conquered the invinci-

ble! they had rolled back the barbarian torrent from the gates of their glad city, and every step that they took among the unburied dead of the enemy told they had won for themselves both victory and peace. With a quick step, but with a downcast eye and a knitted brow, Menenius, the hero of the triumph, followed the path up the hill. Every voice was glad, every heart seemed joyful, but his; but there was a fear, a dread, a conviction in his bosom, that his was the home that had been plundered of its treasure, his was the hearth to be for ever desolate. He strode on to the town, and joy and glory hailed him; and gratitude and admiration proclaimed his name to the skies. They called him the deliverer of his country, the saviour of his native place—they saluted him as victor—they acknowledged him as chief.

"Honoriam?" he asked, "Honoriam?" but no one answered. Honoriam was gone. Since the entrance of the Huns into the city, Honoriam had not been seen: and casting himself down upon a couch, he hid his eyes in his cloak, while gladness and rejoicing filled the midnight air, and all Azimantium was one high festival.

'Twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange! that one small city of the greatest empire in the world—while an inundation of barbarians poured over the land—while fortress and town were cast down and levelled with the earth—while legions fled dismayed, and nations bowed the head—and while the very suburbs of Constantinople, the imperial city, beheld the fearful faces of the Huns—'twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange, that one small city should stand in its solitary freedom, bold, fearless, and unconquered. 'Twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange! Yet the deeds of the children of Azimantium are recorded in an immortal page, wherein we read, that "they attacked in frequent and successful sallies the troops of the Huns, who gradually declined their dangerous neighbourhood; they rescued from their hands the spoil and the captives, and recruited their domestic force by the voluntary association of fugitives and deserters."*

In every sally, in every irruption made by the Azimantines into the vast tract of country now covered with the Huns, Menenius was the leader; and in the fierce inces-

* Gibbon.

sant warfare thus carried on, he seemed to find his only consolation, his only enjoyment. At other times, he would sit sad and gloomy, his vacant eye fixed unobserving upon space, and his heart meditating sad dreams. In the visions of the night, too, when weariness dimmed the fire in his heart, and suffered his eyes to close, the white and fluttering object he had pursued in the fight of Azimantium would again be carried off, while imagination would fill up all that sight had not been able to ascertain, and the form of Honoria, torn away from him by the barbarian, would hold forth its phantom arms, and implore aid and succour in vain. Then his vigorous and manly limbs would writhe with the agony of his dreaming soul, till horror and despair would burst the bands of sleep, and he would start again upon his feet to wreak his great revenge upon the enemy. And yet there was a quality in his soul which—although while an adverse sword was drawn, or a threatening bow was bent, his step was through blood and carnage, his path was terror and death—yet there was a quality in his soul which suspended the uplifted blow when the suppliant and the conquered clasped his knee; and many was the train of captives which he sent home to the city; the pledges of future security and respect to Azimantium.

At length when seventy cities had fallen before the Scythian hordes, and naught but ruins were left to say where they had been, and to point to after ages the sad moral of an empire's decay, the weak Theodosius, unable to protect his subjects, or defend himself, agreed to treat with the mighty barbarian, and to buy precarious peace with gold and concession, when he dared not purchase true security by the sword. Attila dictated the conditions, and Theodosius yielded to all his demands but one, with which the emperor had no power to comply; and that was, that the city of Azimantium should restore the captives taken from the Huns. Attila felt how little power a feeble and degenerate monarch could have over a fearless, noble, unconquerable race; and he felt, too, that all his own power, great and battle born as it was, could scarcely suffice to crush the hearts of Azimantium. The monarch of all the Eastern Empire confessed his inability to compel the restoration of the captives; and Attila, the terror of the world, the scourge of God, the conqueror of nations, treated on equal terms with the small city of Thrace.

Oh how the heart of Menenius beat, when the monarch of the Huns, by the mouth of his envoys, proposed that all prisoners taken between his myriads and the city of Azimantium should be mutually restored! And oh! how his bosom heaved, when, surrounded by the Hunish cavalry, the little knot of Azimantine captives were conducted up the hill! But where was Honoria? where was the beloved!

The Huns declared that they had delivered all, and Honoria was not there—Honoria, without whom all was nothing. Ten of the principal barbarian chiefs were detained as hostages for the safety of her who had not returned; while the envoys of Attila were sent back to learn the savage monarch's will. The reply soon came, that if any of the chiefs of Azimantium dared to trust himself in the dominions of Attila, he should have free means and aid in making every search for the captive said to be detained. Maximin and Priscus, the messengers added, were then on their journey as ambassadors from the imperial court to the King of the Huns, and if the Azimantine chief would join them at Sardica, he would be conducted to the presence of Attila, who loved the brave, even when his enemies.

Menenius sprang upon his horse, and followed by a scanty train, took the way to Sardica, his heart torn with the eternal struggle of those two indefatigable athletes, Hope and Fear. Still, as he went, his eye roamed over the landscape—for even the absorbing sorrow of his own breast had not obliterated his love for his country—and how painful was the sight upon which the eye rested! Desolation—the vacant cottage, the extinguished hearth, the threshold stained with blood, the raven and the vulture gorged and gorging, the mangled and unburied slain, the overthrown cities, the deserted streets through which the speedy grass was already growing up where multitudes had trod—the grass—the verdant and the speedy grass, which, like the fresh joys of this idle world, soon covers over the place that we have held when once we are passed away—ruin, destruction, death—such was the aspect of the land. And as he gazed and saw—the thought of all the broken ties and torn fellowships, the sweet associations and dear thrilling sympathies dissolved, the wreck of every noble art, the scattering of every finer feeling, which the blasting, withering, consuming lightning of war had there accomplished, found

an answering voice deep in the recesses of his own wrung and agonized heart. At the ruins of Naissus—for one stone of the city scarcely remained upon the other—he joined the legates of the emperor, and with them pursued his way. His mind was not attuned to much commune with his fellows; and though Priscus, with learned lore, tempted him to speak of science, and arts, and philosophy; and Maximin, with courtly urbanity, which softened and ornamented the sterner firmness of his character, and Vigilius, the interpreter, with subtle and persuasive art, strove to win the Azimantine chief to unbend from his deep gloom, Menenius could neither forget nor forgive, and sadness was at once in his heart and upon his brow.

Over high mountains, through brown woods, across dark and turbulent rivers, the ambassadors were led on by that part of the barbarian army which was destined to be both their protection and guide. They saw but few of the inhabitants of the country, and little cultivated ground. Drove of oxen and sheep seemed the riches of the land. Pasture appeared to be the employment of the people, and war their sport.

Their march was regulated by the Huns who accompanied them, and by them also was each day's journey limited. The spot for pitching their tents was exactly pointed out, and the hour for departure was not only named, but enforced. Each day, long before that hour came, Menenius was on foot, and he would wander forth in the morning sunshine, and gaze through the deep vacuities in the woods, or let his eyes rest upon the misty and uncertain mountains, while the vast wild wideness of the land would force upon his heart the madness of hoping that his search would prove successful.

Thus had he gone forth one morning, when, in the glade of the forest where their tents were raised, he saw before him one of the barbarians whom he had never beheld before. The cold stern eye of Menenius rested on him for an instant, and then turned to the dim woods again. There was nothing pleasing in his form or in his countenance, and Menenius was passing on. He was short in stature, but broad as a giant, and with each muscular limb swelling with vigour and energy. His head was large and disproportioned—his face flat—his brow prominent—his colour swarthy. A few long and straggling hairs upon his chin, and deep lines of powerful

thought, told that he had long reached manhood, while his white and shining teeth, and his bright keen, speckless eye, spoke vigour undecayed by one year too many.

"Whither strayest thou, stranger!" said the barbarian; "can a Greek enjoy the aspect of solitary nature; can the dweller in cities—the pitiful imitator of the meanest of insects, the ant—can he look with pleasure on the wilds that were given man for his best and original home?"

"Thou art ignorant, Hun!" replied Menenius, "and with the pride of ignorance, despisest that which thou dost not comprehend. Man, in raising cities and ornamenting them with art, only follows the dictates of nature herself. To the brutes she gave the wild world, but added no intellect to her gift, for the world, in its wildest state, was sufficient. To man she gave intellect, and the whole universe, full of materials, on which to employ it. He who is most elevated by nature herself, will use her gifts in the most diversified ways, and he who least uses them, approaches nearest to the brute. Nay, barbarian, roll not thy furious eyes on me; I sought thee not, and he who speaks to me must hear the truth."

For several minutes, however, the Hun did roll his eyes with an expression of fury that strangely contrasted with his perfect silence. Not a word did he speak—not a quiver of the lip betrayed the suppression of any angry tone, and it was not till the fierce glance of his wrath was completely subdued, that he replied, "Vain son of a feeble race, upon whose necks Attila, my lord and thine, has trod, boast not the use of arts which have reduced thy people to what they are, and made them alike unfit for war and peace. Look at their bones whitening in the fields; look at their cities levelled with the plains; look at their manifold and wicked laws, which protect the strong and oppress the weak; look at their silken and luxurious habits, which effeminate their bodies and degrade their minds. This is the product of the arts thou praisest. This is the degrading civilization that thou huggest to thy heart."

"Not so, Hun," replied Menenius; "the corruption which thou hast seen with too sure an eye, springs not from art, or knowledge, or civilization. It springs from the abuse of wealth and power. The Roman empire was as a man, who, covered with impenetrable armour, had conquered all his enemies, and finding none other to
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struggle with, had cast away his shield and breastplate, and lay down on a sunny bank to sleep. In his slumber, new adversaries came upon him, his armour was gone, and he was overthrown. The armour of the empire was courage, decision, and patriotism, the slumber was luxury, and thus it was that the myriads of thy lord penetrated to Constantinople, and destroyed the cities. The arts thou despisest, because thou knowest them not, had no share in bringing on the slumber which has proved so destructive; but let the Huns beware, for the giant may awake."

"Ha!" cried the barbarian, with a triumphant smile, "what is the city that could stand an hour, if Attila bade it fall?"

"Azimantium!" replied Menenius.

The Hun threw back his broad shoulders, and glared upon the Thracian chief with a glance more of surprise than anger—then gazed at him from head to foot, visited each particular feature with his eye, and marked every vigorous and well-turned limb with a look of scrutinizing inquiry. "Thou art Menenius!" he exclaimed, abruptly, after he had satisfied himself. "Thou art Menenius! 'Tis well! 'tis well—I deemed thou hadst been Maximin."

"And had I been so," asked Menenius, "would that have made a difference in thy language?"

"Son of a free and noble race," replied the Hun, "ask me no further. That which may well become thee to speak, would ill befit the suppliant messenger of a conquered king; and that which I would say to the vanquished and the crouching, could not be applied to the brave and the independent. Happy had it been for thy country had she possessed many like to thee, for then she would have fallen with honour: and happy, too, had it been for Attila, my lord, for then his triumphs would have been more glorious."

Menenius was silent. The tone of the Hun was changed. The rudeness of his manner was gone; and though he spoke with the dignity of one whose nation was rich in conquests, there was no longer in his language the assumption of haughty superiority which he had at first displayed.

"And thou," said Menenius, at last, "who am I to fancy thee?"

"I am Onegesius, the servant of Attila the king," replied the Hun; "and mark me, chieftain of a brave

people. Hold but little communion with the slaves of Theodosius as they pass through the dominions of the Huns. The lion may be stung by the viper if he lie down where he is coiled. Now, farewell;" and thus speaking, the Hun turned, and with a proud, firm step, each fall of which seemed planted as for a combat, he took his path away from the Grecian tents.

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The ambassadors pursued their way, and, after some days, encamped late at night upon the banks of the dark and rushing Tebiseus.

The heavens were obscured by heavy leaden clouds driven by the wind into large masses, through the breaks of which a dull and sickly moon glared forth with a fitful and a watery light upon the misty earth. The dim shapes of shadowy mountains, too, were vaguely sketched upon the sky, covered with quick-passing shades, while ever and anon the winds howled forth their melancholy song, a wild and sombre anthem to the grim genius of the scene around.

The tents were pitched, the plain meal was over, the mead had passed round, and sleep had relaxed every weary muscle of the travellers' limbs, when suddenly a hurricane rushed over the whole scene, the river rose, the rain came down in torrents, and the temporary encampment was in a moment overthrown. Drenched and terrified, the legates of the emperor disengaged themselves with difficulty from their falling pavilions, and called loudly for help. Noise and confusion spread around, and the roaring stream rising quickly over the meadow in which they had been sleeping, the howling of the overpowering wind, and the heavy pattering of the rain, added to the disturbance and fear of the scene.

A moment after, a blazing light upon the nearest hill rose like a beacon to direct their steps, and thither the ambassadors were led by the Huns.

Menenius, after he had provided for the safety of his horses and attendants, followed the rest. As he approached the light, he saw, by the figures of several Huns supplying a large fire of dry reeds with fresh fuel, that it had been raised on purpose to guide any travellers overtaken by the storm, to a place of shelter and repose. Attention and kindness awaited him, and he was instantly

led into a large wooden house, where Priscus and Maximin were already seated by a cheerful hearth, at which a young widow, the wife of Attila's dead brother Bleda, was busy in the gentle cares of hospitality. Along the extreme side of the apartment was drawn a line of Scythian slaves, armed as became those who waited on the widow of a king; and as Menenius entered, their rank was just closing, after having given exit to a form which made the Thracian chief start forward, as his eye caught the last flutter of her retiring robes. "Who passed?" he exclaimed, abruptly, forgetting, in the anxious haste of the moment, all idle ceremony. "Who passed but now?"

"Ella, the daughter of the king, and her maidens," was the reply. The heart of Menenius sank, and his eye lost its eager fire. In a few brief words he excused his abruptness; but the widow of Bleda was one of those whose kind hearts find excuses better than we can urge them. "The maiden is fair," she said, "and well merits a stranger's glance. In truth, she knew not that there was another guest of such a mien about to be added to our hearth, or she would have staid to pour the *camus* and the mead. Much would she grieve were she not here to show that part of hospitality." And Bleda's widow sent a maiden to tell her niece that Menenius, the Azimantine chief, sat by the fire untended.

She came—a dark-haired girl, with a splendid brow, and eyes as pure and bright as if a thousand diamonds had been melted to furnish forth their deep and flashing light. A rose as glorious as that upon the brow of morning warmed her cheek, and a quick untaught grace moved in her full and easy limbs, like those of a wild deer. But she was not Honoria; and the eye of Menenius rested on her, as on a fair statue, which, in its cold difference of being, however lovely, however it may call upon admiration, wakens no sympathy within our warmer bosoms.

She, however, gazed on him as on something new, and strange, and bright; and there was in her glance both the untutored fire of artless nature, and the fearless pride of kingly race, and early acquaintance with power. For a moment she stood and contemplated the Thracian chief, with her sandalled foot advanced, and her head thrown back, and her lustrous eye full of wild pleasure; but then suddenly a red flush rose in her cheek, and

spread over her brow, and, with a trembling hand, she filled a cup of mead, touched it with her lips, gave it to Menenius, and again retired.

Menenius lay down to rest, but his dreams were not of her whom he had seen. Gay visions of the former time rose up and visited his brain. From out the dreary tomb of the past, long-perished moments of joy and hope were called, as by an angel's voice, to bless his slumber—Honor!—Azimantium—happiness.

Pass we over the onward journey. After a long and tedious march, the ambassadors arrived at the royal village of the Huns, which was then surrounded by uncultured woods, though at present the rich vineyards of Tokay spread round the land in which it stood. Houses of wood were the only structures which were boasted by the chief city of the monarch of one half the earth; and to the eye of the Greeks, everything seemed poor and barbarous in the simplicity of the Huns. Yet, even lowly as were their cottage palaces, they had contrived to bestow much art on their construction. Fantastic trelliswork, and rich carved screens, and wreathed columns, cut of polished and variegated woods, were scattered in every direction; and while the first faint efforts of an approach to taste were to be found in the taller buildings and in the more correct proportions of the royal dwellings, the idea of war—the national sport and habitual passion of the people—was to be seen in the imitative towers and castles with which they had decorated their dwellings of peace.

Attila himself had not yet returned from his last excursion; but a day did not elapse before his coming was announced by warrior after warrior who arrived, their horses covered with gold, and their followers laden with spoil. All his subjects went forth to gratulate their conquering monarch; and the Greeks, standing on a little eminence, beheld his approach. First came innumerable soldiers, in dark, irregular masses, and then appeared, chieftain after chieftain, all the various nations that he ruled. Then was seen a long train of maidens, in white robes, walking in two lines, each bearing aloft in her hand one end of a fine white veil, which, stretching across to the other side, canopied a row of younger girls, who scattered flowers upon the path. Behind these, mounted on a strong black horse, clothed in one uniform dark robe, without jewel, or gold, or ornament whatever,

came the monarch whose sway stretched over all the northern world.

As he advanced, he paused a moment, while his attendants raised a small silver table, on which the wife of one of his favourite chiefs offered him refreshments on his return. He was still at some distance, but the Greeks could behold him bend courteously to the giver, and raise the cup to his lips. The table was then removed, and onward came the king—nearer—more near—till Menenius might distinguish the features of the dark Hun he had met in the forest.

Menenius sat in the lonely hut which had been appointed for his dwelling, and while the shadows of night fell like the darkening hues of time, as they come deeper and deeper upon the brightness of our youth, hope waxed faint in his heart, and dim despondency spread like twilight over his mind. Alone, in the midst of a wild and barbarous land, the depths of whose obscure forests were probably unknown even to the fierce monarch whose sway they owned, how could he, unfriended, unaided, dream that he would ever discover that lost jewel, which had been torn from the coronet of his happiness? Never! never! never! to behold her again! To journey through a weary life, and fall into the chill, solitary tomb, without the blessed light of those dear eyes which had been the starlike lights of his existence—to dwell for ever in ignorance of her fate, while his fancy, like the damned in Hades, could find nothing but the bitter food of horror and despair—such was his destiny.

"Attila the king!" exclaimed a loud voice, as he pondered, and Menenius stood face to face with the monarch of the North, while the light of the pine-wood torch glared red upon the dark features of the Scythian, and gave to those grim and powerful lines a sterner character and fiercer shade. His voice was gentle, however; and, seating himself on the couch, he spoke with words which had in them a tone of unshared, undisputed, unlimited authority, but elevated by the consciousness of mental greatness, and tempered by admiration and esteem.

"Chief of Azimantium," said the Hun, "while the slaves of a vain and treacherous king wait long ere they are permitted to breathe the same air with Attila, the king of nations disdains not to visit the leader of the brave. Mark me, thou chief of the last free sons of

Greece! The sword of thy country is broken—the sceptre of thine emperors passed away. The seed is gathered which shall sow grass in the palaces of kings—the clouds are collected which shall water the harvest of desolation. Greek, I boast not of my victories—it sufficeth Attila to conquer. But calmly, reasonably measure thy people against mine, and think whether the small band of Azimantines, were they all inspired by the God of battles with courage like thine own, could save the whole of degenerate Greece from the innumerable and warrior people of the North. What—what can Azimantium do, all unsupported, against a world?”

“Each son of Azimantium,” replied Menenius, “can offer up a hecatomb of Scythian strangers, and give his soul to heaven upon the wings of victory. This will Azimantium—and then—perish Greece!”

A shadow passed across the monarch's brow.

“Be not too proud,” he said, “be not too proud! A better fate may yet befall thy city and thy land. So well does Attila love Azimantium, that he claims her as his own from the Greek emperor: and to win her citizens to willingness, he offers his daughter—his loved—his lovely daughter to her chief. Pause!” he added, seeing the quivering of Menenius's lip; “pause and think! Reply not! but remember that thus may Greece be saved—that the safety or destruction of thy land is upon thy tongue. Pause, and let the sun rise twice upon the meditation of thine answer.”

Thus spoke the monarch, and in a moment after, the Azimantine chief was once more left to solitude. Deep and bitter was the smile of contempt that curled the lip of Menenius; for in the proud glory of his own heart, he forgot how low Greece had fallen among the people of the earth, and in the imperishable memory of his love, the mention of another bride was but as the raving of insanity. “I!—I!—Menenius of Azimantium—I wed the daughter of the barbarian! I become a subject of the Hun!—I forget Honoria!”

Another day went down, and Menenius, with the Grecian ambassador, was seated in the halls of Attila, at the banquet which the proud monarch gave at once to the envoys of the Eastern and Western empire. On a raised platform in the midst of the hall was the couch and table of Attila, covered with fine linen and precious stuffs, while fifty small tables on either side were spread out for the

guests invited to the royal feast. An open space was before the board of the monarch, and behind him the hall was filled with a dark fantastic crowd of guards, and attendants, and barbarian slaves.

On the same couch with Attila sat his daughter Iërnë—that beautiful daughter whom Menenius had beheld at the dwelling of Bleda's widow; and as the Azimantine chief passed by, and poured the required libation to "Attila the Brave," the maiden's eyes fixed motionless on the ground, and the blood rose fast into her cheek, like the red morning sun rising up into the pale twilight sky. Menenius passed on unchanged and cold, and took his place with Maximin, the ambassador of Theodosius.

The fare of Attila was plain and rude, but the tables of his guest were spread with all that the fearful luxury of Rome itself could have culled from earth and sea. Ere long the cupbearer filled the golden goblet, and the monarch, rising from his couch, drank to Berek, the bravest of the Huns. Again, after a pause, he rose, but the cup was given him by his daughter, and Attila drank to Menenius, the bravest of the Greeks! Quick and sparkling flowed the mead, and then an old gray man poured to the wild chords of a barbaric lyre, a song of triumph and of battles, while at every close he proclaimed Attila's bridal day. At length a bright troop of young and happy maidens led in, surrounded by their linked arms, three brighter than themselves, from whom the monarch of the North was about to choose a new partner for his mighty throne. Their faces were veiled; but through the long white robes that clothed them, shone out that radiant light of grace and beauty which nothing can conceal. Slowly, as if reluctant, they were brought into the monarch's presence.

Why quivered the lip of Menenius? Why strained his eye upon the first veiled figure? The veil is gone! To him she stretched forth her hands! The table and the banquet are dashed to atoms at his feet, and Honoria is in Menenius's arms.

A thousand swords sprang from their sheaths—a thousand javelins quivered round the hall. "Traitor! Mad-man! Sacrilegious slave!" was shouted in a thousand fierce voices, and a thousand barbarous tongues. But unquailing in the midst stood the Azimantine chief—his left arm round the beating heart of his young bride—his right, armed with that sword which had bowed many a

hero to the dust, raised appealing to the Scythian king. "Monarch of the Huns," he cried, "this is the captive I have come to seek. As you are a man—as you are a warrior—as you are a king! by your oath—by your honour—by your justice! yield her to me, her promised husband, and put us safely off your land. Then, if of all these brave and mighty men," he added, with a frown, "who draw the sword against a single Greek, there be but ten who will meet me brow to brow on the battle plain, I will write it in their blood that I am neither slave nor traitor, but a bold man, who dares to claim and to defend his own!"

Fierce wrath, stern revenge, majestic admiration, had swept over the countenance of Attila, like the broken masses of a rent thunder cloud hurled over the sky by the succeeding blast. "Hold!" he cried. "Warriors! put up our swords. Chief of Azimantium! you rob me of a bride; but if this be the captive you have come to seek, Attila's word is given, and safely, surely, she shall be returned to her home, were she as lovely as the moon. But with you, Greek, with your companions, Maximin, Priscus, and Vigilus, the king has still to deal, and, after what has befallen this day, expect nothing more than justice." As he spoke, he rolled his dark eyes fearfully around, then suddenly raised his hand, exclaiming, "Now, warriors! now!" and before he could strike a blow, Menenius, unprepared, was seized on all sides, and bound tight in every limb, together with the envoys from Theodosius.

All, for an instant, was wild confusion. Honoria, with the other women, were hurried from the hall; and Menenius found himself ranged with Priscus and Maximin before the throne of Attila; while, in the deathlike, ashy, quivering countenance of Vigilus, the interpreter, who stood beside him, he read detected guilt and certain death.

"Hired murderers, sent by an imperial slave to slay his conqueror and master," exclaimed Attila, after he had gazed for some minutes upon the Greeks, "do ye not tremble to find your baseness exposed in the eyes of all the universe? Stand forth, Edecon, and tell the warriors of Attila, how these men came here, under the garb of ambassadors, to slay by treachery, in peace, the king that, by battle, they could not vanquish in war

And you, warriors, lay not your hands upon your swords—Attila will do justice to Attila."

At the command of the king, Edecon, who had been ambassador for Attila at Constantinople, stood forth, and declared, that in an interview with the eunuch Chrysaphius, that favourite of the weak monarch of the East had proposed to him the assassination of his master, and offered him an immense reward. He had affected to consent, and had, that very day, received a purse of gold and jewels from Vigilius the interpreter, who was privy to the whole. The plot he had instantly communicated to Attila, and the purse he now produced. Maximin and Priscus, he doubted not, were cunning men, sent to accomplish the scheme with art; and Menenius, beyond question, was the daring murderer to strike the final blow.

Maximin spoke loudly in his own defence, and Priscus learnedly on the improbability of the tale, while the mouth of Vigilius opened, and his lips quivered, but no sound found utterance. Menenius was silent, but he fixed his bold eye upon Attila, who glared upon them all like a tiger crouching for the spring.

"Maximin and Priscus," said the king, at length, "ye are innocent! Let them be freed. As for yon trembling traitor, guilt is in his eye and on his cheek; but the sword that should smite Vigilius would be disgraced for ever, and find no blood in his coward heart. Let him buy his life, and pay two hundred pounds weight of gold to him he sought to bribe. As for thee, chief of Azimantium—"

"Thou knowest I am guiltless, Hun!" replied Menenius, "and bonds such as these have pressed upon my arms too long."

"Of thy guilt or innocence I know naught," replied the king; "but this I know, that I will guard thee safely till thine emperor send me the head of Chrysaphius, the murdering slave who first sought to tempt my subjects into treachery. Away with Vigilius, till he pay the purchase of his base life; and away with this Azimantine, till Orestes and Eslaw, my envoys, bring me the head of the eunuch from my slave, the emperor."

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In the solitude of a dark, unlighted hut, stretched upon

a bear's hide, which had been cast down for his bed, lay the young chief of Azimantium, pondering his hard fate, while the sounds of many a gay and happy voice without struck with painful discord upon his unattuned ear. Dark and melancholy, the fancies flitted across his brain like the visions of dead friends seen in the dim atmosphere of troubled sleep, and he revolved in his mind that bold cowardice of his ancestors, which taught them to fly from the sorrows and dangers of their fate, by the sure but gloomy passage of the tomb. Was it virtue, he asked himself, or vice—wisdom, or insanity, that allied the last despair to the last hope, and made self-murder the cure of other ills? And, as he thought, sorrow took arms against his better mind, and whispered like a friend, "Die! Die, Menenius! Peace is in the grave!" A new and painful struggle was added to the evils of his state, and still he thought of death as hours and days went by.

Nor was this all; for, as the Dacians tame the lions for the imperial shows, the Huns strove to break his spirit, and subdue his high heart, by reiterated anxieties and cares. Now, he was told of wars with the empire, and the fall of Greece; now, strange whispers were poured into his ear, of some direful fate reserved for himself; now, he heard of the great annual sacrifice offered at the altar of Mars, where a hundred captive maidens washed the platform with their blood. But still, like the great hero of the mighty founder of the epic song, he rose above the waves that poured upon his head, and still answered, "Never! never!" when the name of Azimantium was connected with the dominion of the Huns.

It was one night when a darker melancholy than ever oppressed his mind, and despondency sat most heavy on his soul, that the door was cast open, and a blaze of light burst upon his sight. His eyes, familiar with the darkness, refused at first to scan the broad glare; but when at length they did their office, he beheld, in the midst of her slaves, that fair girl Iárnä, whose offered hand he had refused. Her cheek, which had been as warm as the last cloud of the summer evening, was now as pale as the same cloud when, spiritlike, it flits across the risen moon. But her eye had lost none of its lustre; and it seemed, in truth, as if her whole soul had concentrated there to give fuller effulgence to its living light.

"Chief of Azimantium," said the maiden, "it is my father's will that you be freed, and I—that the generosity of Attila should know no penury—I have prayed, that though Menenius slighted Iërnë, he should wed the woman of his love even in Iërnë's father's halls. My prayer has been granted—the banquet is prepared—the maiden is warned, and the blushes are on her cheek—a priest of thine own God is ready. Rise, then, chief of Azimantium, and change a prison for thy bridal bed. Rise, and follow the slighted Iërnë."

"Oh, lady!" answered Menenius, "call not thyself by so unkind a name. Write on your memory, that, long ere my eyes rested on your loveliness, Honoria was bound to my heart by ties of old affection; and, as your soul is generous and noble, fancy all the gratitude that your blessed words waken in my bosom. Oh! let the thought of having raised me from despair—of having freed me from bonds—of having crowned me with happiness, find responsive joy in your bosom, and let the blessing that you give, return and bless you also."

Iërnë pressed her hand firm upon her forehead, and gazed upon Menenius while he spoke, with eyes whose bright but unsteady beams seemed borrowed from the shifting meteors of the night. The graceful arch of her full coral lip quivered; but she spoke not; and, waving with her hand, the attendants loosened the chains from the hands of the Azimantine, and, starting on his feet, Menenius was free.

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In the brightness and the blaze of a thousand torches, the chief of Azimantium stood in the halls of Attila, with the hand of Honoria clasped in his own. Sorrow and anxiety had touched, but not stolen, her beauty—had changed, but not withered, a charm. Every glance was softened—every feature had a deeper interest—and joy shone the brighter for the sorrow that was gone, like the mighty glory of the sun when the clouds and the tempests roll away.

The dark monarch of the barbarians gazed on the work he had wrought, and the joy that he had given; and a triumphant splendour, more glorious than the beams of battle, radiated from his brow. "Chief of Azimantium," he said, "thou art gold tried in the fire, and Attila ad-

mires thee, though a Greek—not for the beauty of thy form—let girls and pitiful limners think of that!—not for thy strength and daring alone—such qualities are for soldiers and gladiators—but for thy dauntless, unshrinking, unalterable resolution—the virtue of kings, the attribute of gods. Were Attila not Attila, he would be Menenius. Thou hast robbed me of a bride! Thou hast taken a husband from my daughter; but Attila can conquer—even himself. Sound the hymeneal! Advance to the altar! Yon priest has long been a captive among us, but his blessing on Honoria and Menenius shall bring down freedom on his own head.”

The solemnity was over—the barbarian guests were gone, and through the flower-strewed passages of the palace, Honoria and Menenius were led to their bridal chamber; while a thousand thrilling feelings of joy, and hope, and thankfulness, blended into one tide of delight, poured from their mutual hearts through all their frames, like the dazzling sunshine of the glorious noon streaming down some fair valley amid the mountains, and investing every object round in misty splendour, and dream-like light. The fruition of long delayed hope, the gratification of early and passionate love, was not all; but it seemed as if the dark cloudy veil between the present and the future had been rent for them by the Divine hand, and that a long vista of happy years lay before their eyes in bright perspective to the very horizon of being. Such were the feelings of both their bosoms, as, with linked hands and beating hearts, they approached the chamber assigned to them; but their lips were silent, and it was only the love-lighted eye of Menenius, as it rested on the form of his bride, and the timid, downcast, but not unhappy glance of Honoria, that spoke the world of thoughts that crowded in their breasts.

A band of young girls, with the pale Iárnë at their head, met them singing at the door of their chamber. The maidens strewed their couch with flowers, and Ierne gave the marriage cup to the hand of Honoria; but as she did so, there was a wild uncertain light in her eye, and a quivering eagerness on her lip, that made Menenius hold Honoria's arm as she was about to raise the chalice to her mouth.

“Ha! I had forgot,” said the princess, taking back the goblet with a placid smile, “I must drink first, and then, before the moon be eleven times renewed, I too shall be

a bride. Menenius the brave! Honoria the fair! happy lovers, I drink to your good rest! May your sleep be sound! May your repose be unbroken!"

And with a calm and graceful dignity, she drank a third part of the mead. Honoria drank also, according to the custom; Menenius drained the cup, and the maidens withdrawing, left the lovers to their couch. Honoria hid her eyes upon the bosom of Menenius, and the warrior, pressing her to his bosom, spoke gentle words of kind assurance, but in a moment her hand grew deathly cold. "Menenius, I am faint," she cried: "what is it that I feel? My heart seems as it were suddenly frozen, and my blood changed into snow. Oh, Menenius! Oh, my beloved! we are poisoned; I am dying! That cup of mead—that frantic girl—she has doomed us and herself to death."

As she spoke, through his own frame the same chill and icy feelings spread. A weight was upon his heart, his warm and fiery blood grew cold, the strong sinews lost their power, the courageous soul was quelled, and he gazed in speechless, unnerved horror on Honoria, while shade by shade, the living rose left her cheek, and the "pale standard" of life's great enemy marked his fresh conquest on her brow. Her eyes, which, in the hour of joy and expectation, had been bent to the earth, now fixed on his with a long, deep, earnest, imploring gaze of last affection. Her arms, no longer timid, circled his form, and the last beatings of her heart throbbed against his bosom. "Thou art dying!" she said, as she saw the potent hemlock spread death over his countenance, "thou too art dying! Menenius will not leave Honoria even in this last long journey. We go—we go together!"

And faintly she raised her hand, and pointed to the sky, where, through the casement, the bright autumn moon poured her melancholy splendour over the Hungarian hills. A film came over her eyes—a dark unspeakable gray shadow! and oh, it was horrible to see the bright angel part from its clay tabernacle!

In the athletic frame of the lover, the poison did not its cruel office so rapidly. He saw her fade away before his eyes—he saw her pass like a flower that had lived its summer day, in perfume and beauty, and faded with the falling of the night. He could not—he would not so lose her. He would call for aid—some precious antidote

should give her back to life. He unclasped the faint arms that still clung upon his neck. He rose upon his feet, with limbs reduced to infant weakness. His brain reeled. His heart seemed crushed beneath a mountain; but still he staggered forth. He heard voices before. "Help!—help!" he cried,—“help, ere Honoria die!” With the last effort of existence, he rushed forward, tore open the curtain before him, reeled forward to the throne on which Attila held his midnight council—stretched forth his arms—but power, voice, sense, being, passed away, and Menenius fell dead at the monarch's feet.

“Who has done this?” exclaimed the king, in a voice of thunder. “Who has done this? By the god of battles, if it be my own children, they shall die! Is this the fate of Menenius? Is this the death that the hero of Azimantium should have known? No! no! no! red on the battle field—gilded with the blood of enemies—the last of a slain, but not a conquered host—so should the chief have died. Menenius! Kinsman in glory! Attila weeps for the fate of his enemy!”

“Lord of the world!—Lord of the world!” exclaimed a voice that hurried from the chambers beyond, “thy daughter is dead in the arms of her maidens; and dying, she sent thee word, that sooner than forbear to slay her enemies, she had drunk of the cup which she had mingled for them.”

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Attila smote his breast. “She was my daughter,” he exclaimed, “she was, indeed, my daughter! But let her die, for she has brought a stain upon the hospitality of her father; and the world will say that Attila, though bold, was faithless.”

There was wo in Azimantium, while with slow and solemn pomp, the ashes of Honoria and Menenius were borne into the city.

In the face of the assembled people, the deputies of Attila, by oath and imprecation, purified their lord from the fate of the lovers. The tale was simple, and soon told, and the children of Azimantium believed.

Days, and years, and centuries, rolled by, and a race of weak and effeminate monarchs, living alone by the feebleness and barbarism of their enemies, took care that Azimantium should not long remain as a monument

of reproach to their degenerate baseness. Nation followed nation; dynasty succeeded dynasty; a change came over the earth and its inhabitants, and Azimantium was no more. Still, however, the rock on which it stood bears its bold front towards the stormy sky, with the same aspect of courageous daring wherewith its children encountered the tempest of the Huns.

A few ruins, too—rifted walls, and dark fragments of fallen fanes—the pavement of some sweet domestic hearth, long cold—a graceful capital, or broken statue, still tell that a city has been there; and through the country round about, the wild and scattered peasantry, still in the song, and the tale, and the vague tradition, preserve in various shapes, The Story of Azimantium!

THE FISHERMAN OF SCARPHOUT.

TWO CHAPTERS FROM AN OLD HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT midway between Ostend and Sluys, exposed to all the fitful wrath of the North Sea, lies a long track of desolate shore, frowning no fierce defiance back upon the waves that dash in fury against it; but—like a calm and even spirit, which repels by its very tranquil humility the heat of passion and the overbearing of pride—opposing naught to the angry billows, but a soft and lowly line of yellow sands. There nothing grows which can add comfort to existence; there nothing flourishes which can beautify or adorn. Torn from the depths of ocean, and cast by the storm upon the shore, sea shells and variegated weeds will indeed sometimes deck the barren beach, and now and then a green shrub, or a stunted yellow flower, wreathing its roots amid the shifting sand, will here and there appear upon the low hills called *Dunes*. But with these exceptions, all is waste and bare, possessing alone that portion of the sublime which is derived from extent and desolation.

It may be well conceived that the inhabitants of such a spot are few. Two small villages, and half a dozen isolated cottages, are the only vestiges of human habitation to be met with in the course of many a mile; and at the time to which this tale refers, these few dwellings were still fewer. That time was long, long ago, at a period when another state of society existed in Europe; and when one class of men were separated from all others by barriers which time, the great gravedigger of all things, has now buried beneath the dust of bygone years.

Nevertheless, the inhabitants of that tract of sandy country were less different in habits, manners, and even appearance, from those who tenant it at present, than might be imagined; and in original character were very

much the same, combining in their disposition traits resembling the shore on which their habitations stood, and the element by the side of which they lived—simple, unpolished, yet gentle and humble, and at the same time wild, fearless, and rash as the stormy sea itself.

I speak of seven centuries ago—a long time, indeed! but nevertheless then, even then, there were as warm affections stirring in the world, as bright domestic love, as glad hopes and chilling fears as now—there were all the ties of home and kindred, as dearly felt, as fondly cherished, as boldly defended as they can be in the present day; and out upon the dull imagination and cold heart that cannot feel the link of human sympathy binding us to our fellow beings even of the days gone by!

Upon a dull, cold, melancholy evening, in the end of autumn, one of the fishermen of the shore near Scarphout gazed over the gray sea as it lay before his eye, rolling in, with one dense line of foaming waves pouring for ever over the other. The sky was black and heavy, covered with clouds of a mottled leaden hue, growing darker towards the northwest, and the gusty whistling of the rising wind told of the coming storm. The fisherman himself was a tall, gaunt man, with hair of a grizzled black, strong marked, but not unpleasant features, and many a long furrow across his broad, high brow.

The spot on which he stood was a small sand hill on the little bay formed by a projecting ridge of dunes, at the extremity of which stood the old castle of Scarphout—even then in ruins, and at the time of high tide, separated from the land by the encroaching waves, but soon destined to be swept away altogether, leaving nothing but a crumbling tower here and there rising above the waters. Moored in the most sheltered part of the bay, before his eyes, were his two boats; and behind him, underneath the sand hills that ran out to the old castle, was the cottage in which he and his family had dwelt for ten years.

He stood and gazed; and then turning to a boy dressed in the same uncouth garments as himself, he said, "No, Peterkin, no! There will be a storm—I will not go to-night. Go, tell your father and the other men I will not go. I expect my son home from Tournai, and I will not go out on a stormy night when he is coming back after a long absence."

The boy ran away along the shore to some still lower

cottages, which could just be seen at the opposite point, about two miles off; and the fisherman turned towards his own dwelling. Four rooms were all that it contained; and the door which opened on the sands led into the first of these: but the chamber was clean and neat; everything within it showed care and extreme attention; the brazen vessels above the wide chimney, the pottery upon the shelves, all bore evidence of good housewifery; and as the fisherman of Scarphout entered his humble abode, the warm blaze of the fire and the light of the resin candle welcomed him to as clean an apartment as could be found in the palace of princes.

He looked round it with a proud and satisfied smile; and the arms of his daughter, a lovely girl of fourteen, were round his neck in a moment, while she exclaimed in a glad tone, speaking to her mother, who was busy in the room beyond, "Oh, mother, he will not go out to sea to-night!"

Her mother, who had once been very beautiful—nay, was so still—came forth, and greeted her husband with a calm, glad kiss; and sitting down, the father pulled off his heavy boots, and warmed his strong hands over the cheerful blaze.

The wind whistled louder and louder still, the sea moaned as if tormented by the demon of the storm, and few, but dashing drops of heavy rain, came upon the blast, and rattled on the casements of the cottage.

"It will be a fearful night!" said the fisherman, speaking to his daughter. "Emeline, give me the book, and we will read the prayer for those that wander in the tempest."

His daughter turned to one of the wooden shelves; and from behind some very homely articles of kitchen furniture, brought forth one of the splendid books of the Romish church, from which her father read a prayer aloud, while mother and daughter knelt beside him.

Higher still grew the storm as the night came on; more frequent and more fierce were the howling gusts of wind; and the waves of the stirred-up ocean, cast in thunder upon the shore, seemed to shake the lowly cottage as if they would fain have swept it from the earth. Busily did Dame Alice, the fisherman's wife, trim the wood fire; eagerly and carefully did she prepare the supper for her husband and her expected son; and often did Emeline

listen to hear if, in the lulled intervals of the storm, she could catch the sound of coming steps.

At length, when the rushing of the wind and waves seemed at their highest, there came a loud knocking at the door, and the fisherman started up to open it, exclaiming, "It is my son!" He threw it wide; but the moment he had done so, he started back, exclaiming, "Who are you?" and pale as ashes, drenched with rain, and haggard, as if with terror and fatigue, staggered in a man as old as the fisherman himself, bearing in his arms what seemed the lifeless body of a young and lovely woman.

The apparel of either stranger had, at one time, cost far more than the worth of the fisherman's cottage and all that it contained; but now, that apparel was rent and soiled, and upon that of the man were evident traces of blood and strife. Motioning eagerly to shut the door—as soon as it was done, he set his fair burden on one of the low settles, and besought for her the aid of the two women whom he beheld. It was given immediately; and although an air of surprise, and a look for a moment even fierce, had come over the fisherman's countenance on the first intrusion of strangers into his cottage, that look had now passed away; and, taking the fair girl, who lay senseless before him, in his strong arms, he bore her into an inner chamber, and placed her on his wife's own bed. The women remained with her; and closing the door, the fisherman returned to his unexpected guest, demanding abruptly, "Who is that?"

The stranger crossed his question by another—"Are you Walran, the fisherman of Scarphout?" he demanded, "and will you plight your oath not to betray me?"

"I am Walran," replied the fisherman, "and I do plight my oath."

"Then that is the daughter of Charles, count of Flanders!" replied the stranger. "I have saved her at the risk of my life from the assassins of her father!"

"The assassins of her father!" cried the fisherman, "Then is he dead?"

"He was slain yesterday in the church—in the very church itself, at Bruges! Happily his son was absent, and his daughter is saved, at least if you will lend us that aid which a young man, who is even now engaged in misleading our pursuers, promised in your name."

"My son!" said the fisherman. "His promise shall

bind his father as if it were my own. But tell me, who are you?"

"I am Baldwin, lord of Wavrin," replied the stranger. "But we have no time for long conferences, good fisherman. A party of assassins are triumphant in Flanders. The count is slain; his son, a youth, yet unable to recover or defend his own without aid: his daughter is here, pursued by the murderers of her father; she cannot be long concealed, and this night, this very night, I must find some method to bear her to the shores of France, so that I may place her in safety; and as a faithful friend of my dead sovereign, obtain the means of snatching his son's inheritance from the hands of his enemies, ere their power be confirmed beyond remedy. Will you venture to bear us out to sea in your boat, and win a reward such as a fisherman can seldom gain?"

"The storm is loud!" said the fisherman; "the wind is cold; and ere you reach the coast of France, that fair flower would be withered never to revive again. You must leave her here."

"But she will be discovered and slain by the murderers of her father," replied Baldwin. "What, are you a man and a seaman, and fear to dare the storm for such an object?"

"I fear nothing," answered the fisherman, calmly. "But here is my son! Albert, God's benison be upon you, my boy," he added, as a young man entered the cottage, with the dark curls of his jetty hair dripping with the night rain. "Welcome back! but you come in an hour of trouble. Cast the great bar across the door, and let no one enter, while I show this stranger a refuge he knows not."

"No one shall enter living," said the young man, after returning his father's first embrace; and the fisherman, taking one of the resin lights from the table, passed through the room where the fair unhappy Marguerite of Flanders lay, recovering, from the swoon into which she had fallen, to a recollection of all that was painful in existence.

"Should they attempt to force the door," whispered the fisherman to his wife, "bring her quick after me, and bid Albert and Emeline follow." And striding on with the Lord of Wavrin into the room beyond, he gave his guest the light, while he advanced towards the wall which ended the building on that side. It had formed

part of some old tenement, most probably a monastery, which had long ago occupied the spot, when a little town, now no longer existing, had been gathered together at the neck of the promontory on which the fort of Scarphout stood.

This one wall was all that remained of the former habitations; and against it the cottage was built; though the huge stone of which it was composed were but little in harmony with the rest of the low building. To it, however, the fisherman advanced, and placing his shoulder against one of the enormous stones, to the astonishment of the stranger it moved round upon a pivot in the wall, showing the top of a small staircase, leading down apparently into the ground. A few words sufficed to tell that that staircase led, by a passage under the narrow neck of sand hills, to the old castle beyond; and that in that old castle was still one room habitable, though unknown to any but the fisherman himself.

"Here, then, let the lady stay," he said, "guarded, fed, and tended by my wife and children; and for you and me, let us put to sea. I will bring you safe to Boulogne, if I sleep not with you beneath the waves; and there, from the King of France, you may gain aid to re-establish rightful rule within the land."

"To Boulogne," said the stranger, "to Boulogne? Nay, let us pause at Bergues or Calais, for I am not loved in Boulogne. I once," he added, boldly, seeing some astonishment in the fisherman's countenance, "I once wronged the former Count of Boulogne—I scruple not to say it—I did him wrong; and though he has been dead for years, yet his people love me not, and I have had warning to avoid their dwellings."

"And do you think the love or hate of ordinary people can outlive long years?" demanded the fisherman; "but, nevertheless, let us to Boulogne; for *there* is even now the King of France: so said a traveller who landed here the other day. And the king, who is come, they say, to judge upon the spot who shall inherit the long vacant county of Boulogne, will give you protection against your enemies, and aid to restore your sovereign's son to his rightful inheritance."

The Lord of Wavrin mused for a moment, but consented, and all was speedily arranged. The fair Marguerite of Flanders, roused and cheered by the care of the fisherman's family, gladly took advantage of the ref-

uge offered her, and found no terrors in the long damp vaults or ponderous stone door that hid her from the world; and feeling that she herself was now in safety, she scarcely looked round the apartment to which she was led, but gave herself up to the thoughts of her father's bloody death, her brother's situation of peril, and all the dangers that lay before the faithful friend who, with a father's tenderness, had guided her safely from the house of murder and desolation.

He, on his part, saw the heavy stone door roll slowly to after the princess, and ascertaining that an iron bolt within gave her the means of securing her retreat, at least in a degree, he left her, with a mind comparatively tranquillized in regard to her, and followed the fisherman towards the beach.

There the boat was found already prepared, with its prow towards the surf, and one or two of the fisherman's hardy companions ready to share his danger.

The Lord of Wavrin looked up to the dark and starless sky; he felt the rude wind push roughly against his broad chest; he heard the billows fall in thunder upon the sandy shore! But he thought of his murdered sovereign, and of that sovereign's helpless orphans, and springing into the frail bark, he bade the men push off, though he felt that there was many a chance those words might be the signals of his death. Watching till the wave had broken, the three strong seamen pushed the boat through the yielding sand; the next instant she floated; they leaped in, and struggling for a moment with the coming wave, the bark bounded out into the sea, and was lost to the sight of those that watched her from the shore.

CHAPTER II.

There were tears in the blue eye of the morning, but they were like the tears of a spoiled beauty when her momentary anger has gained all she wishes, and the passionate drops begin to be checkered by smiles not less wayward. Gradually, however, the smiles predominated; the clouds grew less frequent and less heavy, the sun shone out with shorter intervals, and though the wind and the sea still sobbed and heaved with the past

storm, the sky was momentarily becoming more and more serene.

Such was the aspect of the coming day, when the unhappy Marguerite of Flanders again opened her eyes, after having for a time forgotten her sorrow in but too brief repose. For a moment she doubted whether the past were not all a dream; but the aspect of the chamber in which she now found herself, very different from that which she had inhabited in her father's palace, soon recalled the sad reality. And yet, as she gazed round the room, there was nothing rude or coarse in its appearance. Rich tapestry was still upon the walls; the dressoir was still covered with fine linen and purple, and many a silver vessel—laver, and ewer, and cup, stood ready for her toilet. The small grated windows, with the enormous walls in which they were set, the faded colours of the velvet hangings of the bed in which she had been sleeping, the vaulted roof, showing no carved and gilded oak, but the cold, bare stone, told that she was in the chamber of a lone and ruined fortress; but one that less than a century before had contained persons in whose veins flowed the same blood that wandered through her own.

Rising, she gazed out of the window, which looked upon the wide and rushing sea, and she thought of the good old Lord of Warvin, and his dangerous voyage; and, like the figures in a delirious dream, the forms of the old fisherman, and his beautiful daughter and fair wife, and handsome dark-eyed son, came back upon her memory.

A slight knock at the door roused her; but her whole nerves had been so much shaken with terror that she hardly dared to bid the stranger enter. At length, however, she summoned courage to do so, and the fair and smiling face of Emeline, the fisherman's daughter, appeared behind the opening door.

Torn from the fond, accustomed things of early days, left alone and desolate in a wild and unattractive spot, surrounded by dangers, and for the first time exposed to adversity, the heart of Marguerite of Flanders was but too well disposed to cling to whatever presented itself for affection. Emeline she found kind and gentle, but though younger, of a firmer mood than herself, having been brought up in a severer school; and to her Marguerite soon learned to cling,

But there was another companion whom fate cast in her way, from whom she could not withhold the same natural attachment, though but too likely to prove dangerous to her peace. Morning and evening, every day, Albert, the fisherman's son, who had been left behind by his father to afford that protection which none but a man could give, visited her retreat in the company of his sister; and Marguerite was soon taught to long for those visits as the brightest hours of her weary concealment.

But in the mean time the fisherman returned no more. Day passed after day; morning broke, and evening fell, and the boat which had left the shore of Scarphout on that eventful evening did not appear again. The eye of the fisherman's wife strained over the waters, and when at eventide the barks of the other inhabitants of the coast were seen approaching the shore, his children ran down to inquire for their parent—but in vain.

About the same time, too, fragments of wrecks—masts, sails, and planks—were cast upon the sands, and dark and sad grew the brows of the once happy family at the point of Scarphout. The two other men whom he had chosen to accompany him were unmarried, but their relations at length gave up the last hope, and the priest of Notre Dame de Blankenbergh was besought to say masses for the souls of the departed. The good old man wept as he promised to comply, for though he had seen courts, and lived in the household of a noble prince, he loved his simple flock, and had ever been much attached to the worthy man whose boat was missing.

Marguerite of Flanders, with a fate but too intimately interwoven with that of the unfortunate family at Scarphout, had been made acquainted with the hopes and fears of every day, had mingled her tears with Emeline, and had even clasped the hand of Albert, while she soothed him with sympathetic sorrow for his father's loss. "Mine is an unhappy fate," she said, "to bring sorrow and danger even here, while seeking to fly from it myself."

"Grieve not, lady, in that respect," replied Albert, raising her hands to his lips; "we have but done our duty towards you, and our hearts are not such as to regret that we have done so, even though we lose a father by it. Neither fear for your own fate. The times must change for better ones. In the mean while you are in

safety here, and should need be, I will defend you with the last drop of my blood."

The morning that followed, however, wore a different aspect. Scarcely were matins over, when the good old priest himself visited the cottage of the fisherman, and proceeded to those of his companions, spreading joy and hope wherever he came. What, it may be asked, was the source of such joy? It was but a vision! The old man had dreamed, he said, that he had seen the fisherman of Scarphout safe and well, with a net in his hand, in which were an innumerable multitude of fishes. And this simple dream was, in that age, sufficient to dry the eyes of mourning, and bring back hope to bosoms that had been desolate.

Albert flew to communicate the tale to Marguerite of Flanders, and there was spoken between them many a word of joy—joy that so often entwines its arms with tenderness. He now came oftener than ever, for the old priest by some means had learned that he took an interest in all the changing fortunes of the state of Flanders, and daily the good man brought him tidings, which sometimes he felt it a duty, sometimes a pleasure, to tell to the lonely dweller in the ruined castle.

He found, too, that his presence cheered her, and that his conversation won her from her grief. She began to cling even more to him than to his sister; for he knew more of the world, and men, and courts, than Emeline, and he thought it but kind to afford her every solace and pleasure he could give. Each day his visits became more frequent, and continued longer.

Sometimes he would liberate her, after a sort, from her voluntary prison, by taking her, with Emeline, in his boat upon the moonlight sea, or even by leading her along, under the eye of Heaven's queen, upon the smooth sands, when the waves of a calm night rippled up to their feet. At other times he would sit upon the stones of the old battlements, rent and rifted by the warfare of ages, and would while her thoughts away from herself by tales of other days, when those battlements had withstood the assault of hosts, and those halls had been the resort of the fair and brave, now dust.

Then, again, he would give her tidings which he had gained while dwelling at Namur or at Tournay; reciting the gallant deeds of the servants of the Cross in distant Palestine, or telling of the horrors of captivity in Pay-

nimrie ; and then, too, he would sing, as they sat above the waters, with a voice, and a skill, and a taste, which Marguerite fancied all unequalled in the world.

Day by day, and hour by hour, the fair inexperienced Princess of Flanders felt that she was losing her young heart to the youth of low degree ; and yet what could she do to stay the fugitive, or call him back to her own bosom from his hopeless flight ? It was not alone that Albert was, in her eyes at least, the handsomest man she had ever beheld—it was not alone that he was gentle, kind, and tender—but it was that on him alone she was cast for aid, protection, amusement, information, hope ; that her fate hung upon his word ; and that while he seemed to feel and triumph in the task, yet it was with a deep, earnest, anxious solicitude for her peace and for her security.

And did she think, that with all these feelings in her bosom, he had dared to love her in return—to love her, the princess of that land in which he was alone the son of a poor fisherman ? She knew he had ; she saw it in his eyes, she heard it in every tone, she felt it in the tender touch of the strong hand that aided her in her stolen wanderings. And thus it went on from day to day, till words were spoken that no after thought could ever recall, and Marguerite owned, that if Heaven willed that her father's lands should never return to her father's house, she could, with a happy heart, see state and dignity pass away from her, and wed the son of the fisherman of Scarphout.

But still the fisherman himself returned not. Days had grown into weeks, and weeks had become months, yet no tidings of him or his companions had reached the shore, and men began to fancy that the vision of the old priest might be no more than an ordinary dream. Not so, however, the family of the fisherman himself. They seemed to hold the judgment of the good man infallible, and every day he visited their cottage, bringing them tidings of all the events which took place in the struggle that now convulsed the land.

By this time, the King of France had roused himself to chastise the rebels of Flanders, and to reinstate the young count in his dominions. He had summoned his vassals to his standard, and creating two experienced leaders marshals of his host, had entered the disturbed territory with lance in the rest. Little armed opposi-

tion had been made to his progress, though two or three detached parties from his army had been cut off and slaughtered. But this only exasperated the monarch still more, and he had been heard to vow that nothing but the death of every one of the conspirators would satisfy him for the blood of Charles the Good, and of the faithful friends who had fallen with him.

Such was the tale told by the good priest to Albert, the fisherman's son, one day towards the end of the year, and by him repeated to Marguerite of Flanders, who heard it with very mingled feelings; for if a momentary joy crossed her heart to think that the murderers of her father would receive their just reward and her brother would recover the coronet of Flanders, the fear, the certainty that she herself would be torn from him she loved, overclouded the brief sunshine, and left her mind all dark.

The next day, however, new tidings reached Albert, and filled his heart with consternation and surprise. Burchard, the chief murderer of the dead count, had, it was said, despatched a messenger to the King of France, to bid him either hold off from Bruges, or send him a free pardon for himself and all his companions, lest another victim should be added to those already gone from the family of the dead count. "I have in my power," he had added, "the only daughter of Charles, called by you the Good. I know her retreat—I hold her as it were in a chain, and I shall keep her as a hostage, whose blood shall flow if a hard measure be dealt to me."

Albert fell into deep thought. Could it be true, he asked himself, that Burchard had really discovered Marguerite of Flanders? If so, it were time, he thought, to fulfil one part of his father's directions concerning her, at any cost to himself; and as those directions had been, in case danger menaced her in the retreat, to carry her to sea, and, landing on the coast of France, to place her in the hands of the king or his representative, it may easily be conceived that the execution thereof would be not a little painful to one for whom each hour of her society was joy.

The more he pondered, however, the more he felt that it must be done; but it happened that for the last three days, four or five strange sail had been seen idly beating about not far from the coast, and Albert deter-

mined, in the first instance, to ascertain their purpose. With some young men from the neighbouring cottages, he put to sea, and finding an easy excuse to approach one of the large vessels which he had beheld, he asked, as if accidentally, to whom they belonged, when, with consternation and anxiety, he heard that they were the ships of "Burchard, Prévôt of St. Donatien."

Returning at once to the shore, he dismissed his companions and sought his father's cottage; but there he found that tidings had come during his absence that the King of France had advanced upon Bruges, and that Burchard had fled with his troops; but the same report added, that the rebels, hotly pursued by the chivalry of France, had directed their flight towards the seashore. Time pressed—the moment of danger was approaching; but still great peril appeared in every course of action which could be adopted. The escape by sea was evidently cut off; the retreat of Marguerite of Flanders was apparently discovered; and if a flight by land were attempted, it seemed only likely to lead into the power of the enemy.

With her, then, he determined to consult, and passing through the vaults, he was soon by the side of the fair unfortunate girl, whose fate depended upon the decision of the next few minutes. He told her all; but to her as well as to himself, to fly seemed more hazardous than to remain. The high tide was coming up; in less than half an hour the castle would be cut off from the land; the King of France was hard upon the track of the enemy, and various events might tend to favour her there.

"I would rather die," said the princess, "than fall living into their hands; and I can die here as well as anywhere else, dear Albert."

"They shall pass over my dead body ere they reach you," answered he. "Many a thing has been done, Marguerite, by a single arm; and if I can defend you till the king arrives, you are safe."

"But arms?" she said. "You have no arms."

"Oh! yes, I have," he answered. "No one knows the secrets of this old castle but my father and myself; and there are arms here too for those who need them. Wait but a moment, and I will return."

His absence was as brief as might be; but when he came back, Marguerite saw him armed with shield and

casque, sword and battle axe; but without either haubert or coat of mail, which, though they might have guarded him from wounds, would have deprived him of a part of that agility which could alone enable one to contend with many.

"If I could but send Emeline," he said, as he came up, "to call some of our brave boatmen from the cottages to our assistance here, we might set an army at defiance for an hour or two."

Marguerite only answered by pointing with her hand to a spot on the distant sands, where a small body of horsemen, perhaps not a hundred, were seen galloping at full speed towards Scarphout. Albert saw that it was too late to call further aid; and now only turned to discover where he could best make his defence in case of need.

There was a large massy wall, which, ere the sea had encroached upon the building, ran completely round the castle, but which now only flanked one side of the ruins, running out like a jetty into the waters which had swallowed up the rest. It was raised about twenty feet above the ground on one side, and perhaps twenty-five above the sea on the other; and at the top, between the parapets, was a passage which would hardly contain two men abreast. Upon this wall, about halfway between the keep and the sea, was a small projecting turret, and there Albert saw that Marguerite might find shelter, while, as long as he lived, he could defend the passage against any force coming from the side of the land. He told her his plans; and for her only answer, she fell upon his neck and wept. But he wiped her tears away with his fond lips, and spoke words of hope and comfort.

"See!" he said, "the sea is already covering the *chaussée* between us and the land, and if they do not possess the secret of the vaults, they cannot reach us till the tide falls."

When he turned his eyes to the shore, the body of horsemen were within a mile of the castle; but then, with joy inexpressible, he beheld upon the edge of the sand hills, scarcely two miles behind them, a larger force hurrying on as if in pursuit with banner and pennant, and standard displayed, and lance beyond lance bristling up against the sky.

"The King of France! the King of France!" he

cried; but still the foremost body galloped on. They reached the shore, drew up their horses when they saw that the tide was in; turned suddenly towards the cottage; and the next moment Albert could see his mother and Emeline fly from their dwelling across the sands. The men-at-arms had other matters in view than to pursue them; but Albert now felt that they were aware of the secret entrance, and that Marguerite's only hope was in his own valour.

"To the turret, my beloved!" he cried, "to the turret!" And half bearing, half leading her along, he placed her under its shelter, and took his station in the pass. A new soul seemed to animate him, new light shone forth from his eye; and, in words which might have suited the noblest of the land, he exhorted her to keep her firmness in the moment of danger, to watch around, and give him notice of all she saw from the loopholes of the turret.

Then came a moment of awful suspense, while in silence and in doubt they waited the result; but still the host of France might be seen drawing nearer and more near; and the standard of the king could be distinguished floating on the wind amid a thousand other banners of various feudal lords. Hope grew high in Albert's breast, and he trusted that ere Burchard could find and force the entrance, the avenger would be upon him. He hoped in vain, however, for the murderer was himself well acquainted with the spot, and had only paused to secure the door of the vaults, so that his pursuers could not follow by the same means he himself employed. In another minute loud voices were heard echoing through the ruin, and Albert and Marguerite, concealing themselves as best they could, beheld the fierce and bloodthirsty prévôt with his companions seeking them through the castle.

Still onward bore the banners of France; and ere Burchard had discovered their concealment, the shore at half a bowshot distance was lined with chivalry. So near were they, that, uninterrupted by the soft murmur of the waves, could be heard the voice of a herald calling upon the rebels to surrender, and promising pardon to all but the ten principal conspirators. A loud shout of defiance was the only reply; for at that very moment the eye of Burchard lighted on the form of Albert as he

crouched under the wall, and the men-at-arms poured on along the narrow passage.

Concealment could now avail nothing; and starting up with his battle axe in his hand, he planted himself between the rebels and the princess. The French on the shore could now behold him also, as he stood with half his figure above the parapet; and instantly, seeming to divine his situation, some crossbow-men were brought forward, and poured their quarrels on the men of the prévôt as they rushed forward to attack him. Two or three were struck down; but the others hurried on, and the safety of Albert himself required the crossbow-men to cease, when hand to hand he was compelled to oppose the passage of the enemy. Each blow of his battle axe could still be beheld from the land; and as one after another of his foes went down before that strong and ready arm, loud and gratulating shouts rang from his friends upon the shore.

Still others pressed on, catching a view of Marguerite herself, as, in uncontrollable anxiety for him she loved, she gazed forth from the turret door, and a hundred eager eyes were bent upon her, certain that if she could be taken, a promise of pardon, or a death of vengeance at least, would be obtained; but only one could approach at a time, and Albert was forming for himself a rampart of dead and dying. At that moment, however, Burchard, who stood behind, pointed to the castle court below, where a number of old planks and beams lay rotting in the sun.

A dozen of his men sprang down, caught up the materials which he showed them, planted them against the wall beyond the turret, and soon raised up a sort of tottering scaffold behind the place where Marguerite's gallant defender stood. He himself, eager in the strife before him, saw not what had happened; but she had marked the fatal advantage the enemy had gained, and, gliding like a ghost from out the turret, she approached close to his side, exclaiming, "They are coming!—they are coming from the other side! and we are lost!"

Albert turned his head, and comprehended in a moment. But one hope was left. Dashing to the earth the next opponent who was climbing over the dead bodies between them, he struck a second blow at the one beyond, which made him recoil upon his fellows. Then casting his battle axe and shield away, he caught the

light form of Marguerite in his arms, sprang upon the parapet, and exclaiming, "Now God befriend us!" plunged at once into the deep sea, while, at the very same moment, the heads of the fresh assailants appeared upon the wall beyond.

A cry of terror and amazement rang from the shore; and the King of France himself, with two old knights beside him, rode on till the waters washed their horses' feet. Albert and Marguerite were lost to sight in a moment; but the next instant they appeared again; and, long accustomed to sport with the same waves that now curled gently round him as an old loved friend, bearing the head of Marguerite lifted on his left arm, with his right he struck boldly towards the shore.

On—he bore her! and like a lamb in the bosom of the shepherd, she lay without a struggle, conquering strong terror by stronger resolution. On—he bore her! Glad shouts hailed him as he neared the shore; and with love and valour lending strength, he came nearer and more near. At length his feet touched the ground, and throwing both arms round her, he bore her safe, and rescued, till he trod the soft, dry sand. Then kneeling before the monarch, he set his fair burden softly on the ground—but still he held her hand.

"Hold! nobles—hold!" cried the King of France, springing from his horse. "Before any one greets him, I will give him the greeting he well has won. Advance the standard over us! 'Albert of Boulogne, in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George, I dub thee knight! Be ever, as to-day, gallant, brave, and true. This is the recompense we give. Fair lady of Flanders, we think you owe him a recompense likewise; and we believe that, according to our wise coast laws, that which a fisherman brings up from the sea is his own by right. Is it not so, my good Lord of Boulogne?' and he turned to a tall old man beside him. "You, of all men, should know best; as for ten years you have enacted the *Fisherman of Scarphout*."

The nobles laughed loud, and with tears of joy the old Count of Boulogne, for it was no other, embraced his gallant son, while at the same time the Lord of Wavrin advanced, and pressed Marguerite's hand in that of her deliverer, saying, "Her father, sire, by will, as you will find, gave the disposal of her hand to me, and I am but doing my duty to him in bestowing it on one

who merits it so well. At the same time, it is a comfort to my heart to offer my noble lord, the Count of Boulogne, some atonement for having done him wrong in years long gone, and for having, even by mistake, brought on him your displeasure and a ten years' exile. He has forgiven me, but I have not forgiven myself; and as an offering of repentance, all my own lands and territories, at my death, I give, in addition, to the dowry of Marguerite of Flanders."

We will not pause upon the death of Burchard, Prévôt of St. Donatien. It was, as he merited, upon a scaffold. Explanations, too, are tedious, and *the old history* tells no more than we have here told, leaving the imagination of its readers to fill up all minor particulars in the life of the *Fisherman of Scarphout*.

These tales were followed by a moral essay on the Use of Time, which none of the party would acknowledge, though it was strongly suspected to be the production of a young lady, in the assumed character of an old man.

THE USE OF TIME.

TIME, considered in the same light as the other possessions of man, is certainly of them all the most valuable, as so very small portion is allotted to each individual. Yet every means are employed by the great bulk of mankind to waste that of which our quantity is so diminutive, every art is used to dissipate what will naturally fly from us, every idea is bent on driving away that which we can never recall.

Our first thought, on awaking from sleep, is, How shall I spend the day? Surely it ought rather to be, How shall I best employ those moments of which Heaven has given me so few? which of the various modes of filling my time will be most consonant to reason and virtue—will most redound to mine own honour—will be most advantageous to society?

There is no art which would be more beneficial to the world, or which is less practised, than the economy of

moments. A thousand spaces present themselves in the life of every man, which are left unoccupied, even amid the bustle of pleasure, or the anxiety of business—too small to be employed in serious study, too sudden and evanescent to offer opportunity for any prolonged enjoyment. But these vacuities might almost always be used to produce either some harmless gratification to ourselves, or some benefit to others; some improvement of our corporeal or intellectual faculties, or some scheme for giving satisfaction, or acquiring happiness. Man need never be idle, even for an instant. If the accident of the moment deprive him of books, the page of nature will most frequently be before him. Should this also be excluded from his view, let him turn his consideration to the tablet of his own mind; let him correct its errors, let him engrave more deeply the lines of right; let him strengthen the powers of reason, by examining and arranging his own thoughts; let him think, but not dream; and he will find an inexhaustible fund of employment and delight—a fund which is always replete with improvement, and which is constantly accessible to his research.

Moments are the most precious treasures we possess; and by them most frequently is the fate of man decided. The ultimate effects of the impulse or accident of an instant will frequently give a colouring to the whole picture of our future life; either shadow it with sorrow or brighten it with prosperity. Moments, therefore, ought never to be neglected: they ought never to be wasted in idleness, nor remain unguarded by vigilance; for in their passing, they hurry on our fate; and on their occupation and event our happiness here and hereafter depends.

Procrastination is another of the most idle ways of wasting time: more destructive to happiness, more baneful to society, more hostile to virtue and reason, than almost any other custom short of actual vice. It weakens the mind, it cheats the understanding, and induces a state of intellectual imbecility, always increasing and never to be overcome. It is not alone that we substitute resolutions for actions, and spend in determinations those moments which ought to be employed in doing service to ourselves or benefiting society; but the mental cowardice grows upon us, and we lose the power even of resolving, where action is necessary, and

where doubt is still more dangerous than error; perplexing our mind with distressing hesitation, as opposite to necessary caution as real prudence is to headlong rashness and blind timidity. Procrastination has been called "the thief of time." It is worse! It is the murderer of man's best friend.

Was all our time filled with the obvious duties which present themselves to our view—engaged in the harmless pleasures that at every step lie in our path, or employed in well-directed observation and moral improvement—were those vacant moments, which men feel so burdensome, snatched eagerly for the acquirement of knowledge, or the reciprocation of benefits—the advantage to mankind would be, not alone the increased enjoyment of existence, but also, escape from temptation to evil, and security in the path of right.

Notwithstanding these observations, every man will find that he cannot always compel his mind to any particular object; and that, when he wishes to employ profitably a vacancy in his time, he must allow his thoughts to follow, in a degree, their former course; or, at least, guide them into a new channel by some easy means of communication.

I have often myself experienced this restiveness of imagination; and whether it be from the weakness of age, or a natural drowsiness of constitution, I know not; but, whenever I endeavour to force my ideas towards subjects unassimilating with previous impressions, especially when at all under the influence of bodily fatigue, my mind seeks to escape from the burdensome employment I would impose on it, by taking refuge in the arms of slumber.

I had one day striven hard to fix my thoughts upon subjects very nearly connected with the foregoing observations, although, at the moment, I was fatigued and exhausted with exercises and occupations unknown and dissimilar to my secluded habits; and, as I endeavoured to arrange my ideas in a more distinct form, gradually they lost their course, became more and more confused, and I dropped asleep.

If it be natural for the weary meditator to sleep, it is still more natural for the poet or essayist to dream; and, indeed, I have a custom of carrying on, during the hours of repose, that train of thought, which has occupied me while awake: dressed indeed in a more fanciful

garb, and marshalled with all the extravagance of uncontrolled imagination.

On the present occasion, no sooner had I closed my eyes, than, as usual, the ideas which I had impressed on my mind again appeared, but in somewhat of a different form. The whole objects in the room, however, were unchanged, even in the visions of my sleep. I still reclined in my easy chair. My table, littered with papers, was before me—the picture of my great grandfather stared me in the face from the other side of the room—my wig hung in its usual recess by the fireplace—my snuffbox remained half open on the table; and my red morocco slippers rested on their own peculiar stool, undisturbed by intruding feet.

In a few minutes, as I fixed my eyes upon the picture of my great grandfather, the reverend effigy began to move; the next instant the figure descended from the background, and bowing with all the formal grace of one thousand seven hundred and seven, advanced towards the table. I returned the salutation of my reverend ancestor, and begged him to be seated—I could do no less for one who had made such advances—and then, in all that absurd caricature of real life which dreams occasionally display, we began to pour forth an overwhelming flood of compliments upon each other, in which, however, the copiousness of my great grandfather had considerably the advantage. Indeed, he seemed resolved to indemnify himself in that one night for the ages of silence he had passed within his frame.

At length, after an oration too long to be repeated, and which, in truth, I scarcely understood, he informed me, that knowing my desire to see all the moments of my passed life, he had come out of the canvass on purpose to gratify me; and that he would immediately call them to my sight, exactly as they had really been, in distinct classes, and in regular routine.

As he concluded, he rapped the snuffbox, with which he was represented in the portrait, and in a moment the room was filled with little winged boys, resembling our pictures of cherubim. "These," said my ancestor, "are the first twenty years of thy life. You may observe, that most of them are blind, for men, like kittens, do not open their eyes until they have been some time in the world—those that appear all over prickles, and who flutter about with such vehemence, are the moments

wasted in love—those with sleepy air, swarthy complexion, and dusty wings, have passed you while poring over old authors and musty volumes : and those that fly about casting somersets in the air, like tumbler pigeons, are the instants spent in balls and assemblies in the giddy days of youth."

"But why," demanded I, "do so many that I see carry a scull, more especially those that bear a smile upon their lips, as if they mocked the memento in their hands?"

"All those," replied he, "are moments wasted ; some in folly, some in actual vice, and some passed by, unfilled by action, or unemployed by thought ; but all alike, the winged hasteners of mortality."

"But are not all the others the same?" demanded I, "even those who appear so calm and placid ; those few, those very few, who neither laugh nor frown, but whose looks are full of expression, and whose unclosed eyes seem to beam with approbation—surely all moments tend alike towards the tomb?"

"Those," replied he, "are the instants given to the doing of good deeds and to the pursuit of virtue ; and they lead us even beyond the tomb ; through the portal of death, open the gates of life, and smooth our passage to eternity."

He had now called to view the next twenty years of my life ; and directly another winged crowd appeared, some of whom bore ladders, many of the steps whereof were broken or irregular ; and these, I was told, were the moments given to the delusions of pride and the dreams of ambition. Others were little gloomy-looking imps, which, however, often when they would seem to frown the most, would suddenly assume a smile, so placid and beaming, that a ray from Heaven appeared to have fallen upon their features. These, I found, were the moments of well-conducted study, calm reflection, and self-examination. Some, again, had no bodies ; and their wings were decked with all hues and colours, as if each were a rainbow ; but at the same time, like the painted follower of the summer cloud, they were thin, transparent, and unsubstantial. These, he informed me, were times of vain imaginations, and unreasonable desires. A multitude came next ; many of whom had the brow bent, and the corners of the mouth drawn into a kind of sneer. There were others, whose features at

once displayed a tear and a smile, both so bright, it was impossible to say which was the most radiant. Of these two sorts, the first were the moments of cynicism and misanthropy; and the second displayed the times given to particular charity or general benevolence.

"And now," said my great grandfather, "for the next twenty years."

"Stop, stop, my dear sir," cried I, "remember I am not sixty yet."

"Fifty-nine years, six months, three days, eleven hours, five-and-twenty minutes, four seconds," replied he, in an angry tone. The fearful recapitulation put an end to both my dream and my slumber; and starting up in my chair, I found—the clock striking.

There were many other contributions, but I have only kept a copy of two more, the first of which was suggested by the apprehensions expressed by one of the party, lest the multiplication of steam engines should ultimately exhaust all the fuel in the world. The second was occasioned by a reference made to the days when we had first met, by one in whom the equanimity of a high mind had preserved all the freshness of extreme youth.

THE LAST FIRE:

A VISION OF STEAM.

[As I sat, a few nights ago, reading in the newspapers many alarming calculations concerning the consumption of fuel by the multiplication of steam engines, I fell into a dose, when the following awful and prophetic vision presented itself to my eyes. Immediately on waking, it fell naturally, as it were, into verse; and I think the subject too important to be withheld from public consideration.]

I SLEPT; and, in a vision, to my eyes
Nature's last tragedy appeared to rise.
Man's climbing mind has subtilized each art,
Sublimed the whole, and perfected each part.
Laws, arts, and arms, had undergone a change,
Not less magnificent because most strange.

Steam, mighty steam ! had superseded all—
 Made horses bankrupts, and made bread to fall.
 Steam boats, steam guns, steam kitchens, and steam coaches,
 To this perfection made the first approaches :
 But this was nothing to the wondrous steaming
 The future showed me as I lay a dreaming.
 Vain in description to waste precious paper—
 Suffice it, Europe was one cloud of vapour !

But, ah ! alas ! that vapour e'er should feel
 The rotatory roll of Fortune's wheel !
 Fuel grew dear ! French forests fell like grass ;
 Tynemouth, Wall-end, and Kendal, cried, " Alas !"
 Nor even could the Indian savage roam
 Through ancient woods, his dim primeval home.
 Long every shrub, and bush, and branch, and tree,
 Had heated boilers, and had ceased to be ;
 And men were forced to turn to uses vile
 Full mapy a laboured, many a learned pile.
 Many a volume too, and many a tome,
 Sharing alike the universal doom,
 Now proved a blessing, where they proved a bore,
 And blazed with fire they never knew before !
 Wondrous ! with what avidity men brought
 Those solemn works with wit and learning fraught—
 State records, parliamentary debates,
 Polemic tracts, and essays upon states—
 To light the fire which every parish vowed
 To warm the noses of the coalless crowd.

Romances next were hurled into the flame ;
 Next poets, playwrights, historians, came :
 Last, Homer, Virgil, Milton, Shakspeare, Scott,
 With many a sigh, were added to the lot :
 But these the unwilling owners e'en confessed
 Burned longer, clearer, brighter, than the rest.
 Next furniture was fetched—drawers, tables, chairs,
 Beds, stools, and every sort of wooden wares ;
 Till men were forced to seek the aid of stones
 To bear their dinners and to rest their bones,
 Till all was burnt. Then surly winter rose,
 And took blue wretches by the frozen nose ;
 And sad it was to see each chilly wight,
 With hands in pockets and coat buttoned tight,
 Run up and down the waste, uncovered earth,
 Cursed with black cold, sad enemy to mirth,
 And, as they ran, remorse their bosoms tore,
 For joys they'd heedless cast away before.
 Dandies and Russians, Dutchmen, hargemen, tars,
 Regretted wasted pipes and lost segars ;
 And patriotic Catholics and Irish priests
 Thought good wood wasted on heretic beasts,
 Called Smithfield firelighting a thriftless trade,
 And bloody Mary but a wasteful jade.

Vainly they ran ! No cheering warmth they found,
 And the dull sky upon their misery frowned ;
 And when they entered in their doorless homes,
 'Twas stony coldness all like empty tombs.
 With phrensiéd energy they dug the ground,
 Or dived the sea. Nor coal nor wood they found !
 And many a wretch would lay him down to die,
 And welcome death without one envious sigh ;
 No terrors found they in his icy stare—
 They could not well be colder than they were.
 Still many raged and struggled for warm life,
 And waged with cold and death unequal strife,
 Dined on raw cabbages, devoured raw beef,
 Gained indigestion, but gained no relief.

One man there was—a waterman by trade,
 Erst in green coat and plated badge arrayed ;
 Men called him Fish, and rightly him did call—
 For he could dive and swim, possessing all
 The useful attributes of finny birth—
 Finding the water warmer than the earth,
 He spent his time in diving ; and one day
 Found in the river's bottom, where they lay
 Hid from the danger of devouring flames,
 The stakes that Cæsar drove into the Thames !
 " Ho, ho !" cried he ; " I've found a treasure here
 Shall warm me snugly till the rolling year
 Brings jolly summer." So with might and main
 He tugged them forth and bore them to the plain :
 But, now he'd got them, he had still to learn
 That wood when wet is difficult to burn.
 Quick witted in himself, he well divined,
 Though cold at heart, some warmth remained behind ;
 And having ranged the timber with much art,
 He sat and dried it with his broadest part.
 A long, long week, seven weary nights and days,
 Drying the expectant pile he careful stays.
 Thus o'er her nest the mother eagle broods ;
 Or thus the phoenix of Arabian woods
 Sits on his aromatic pile, whose fire,
 Of new life redolent, shall soon aspire.

At length 'twas dry ! Now with an eager hand
 Two flints he seized and fired each rotten brand—
 Each rotten brand a grateful ardour showed ;
 Forth burst the flame, and on the sky it glowed.
 High rose the flame ; too high, alas ! for now
 An ancient woman, on a mountain's brow,
 Running some worsted through a needle's eye,
 (What is it not old women will descry ?)
 Found out the fire for Fish that furtive flamed,
 And forth with scream and shout the fact proclaimed.
 " A fire ! A fire ! A fire !" the beldam cried ;
 " A fire ! A fire !" the village all replied ;
 " A fire ! A fire ! A fire !" was echoed far and wide.

Each babe took up the tale, each ancient sire,
 Though deaf, and blind, and lame, repeated "Fire!"
 High, low, rich, poor, good, bad—all cold the same—
 Loud shouted "Fire!" and kindled at the name.
 First hamlets, villages, assumed the cry;
 Through burghs and cities then the tidings fly;
 All traced them back to where they first began;
 All bawled out "Fire!" and as they bawled they ran.
 Now Fish, who selfishly had hoped alone
 To enjoy the fire that he himself had won,
 Astonished sees the world around him swarm—
 Millions on millions, eager to get warm!

On, on they rushed, one on the other pressed;
 And still the crowd behind impelled the rest.
 All nations, languages, heights, features, hues,
 That the wide universe could then produce,
 Running, and jostling, scrambling, tumbling came,
 Jammed into marmalade around that flame.

Then Fish, indignant, cried with loud command—
 A brandished boat hook in his dauntless hand,
 "Stand back, my masters! You may all be d—d!
 The fire's my own, and I will not be bammed!
 Or since the generous ardour fires your soul
 To seek this genial flame, from either pole,
 With me, its lord, possession to contend,
 And squeeze me flat my right while I defend—
 Thus I defy you, caitiffs all, and dare
 The bold to follow, and my fate to share!"*

Proudly he said, and sprang into the flame:
 High o'er his head the fiery eddies came;
 The crowd beheld, and, maddened with the sight:
 Dashed on the blaze, and perished in the light.
 The fire was out; but still they onward rushed:
 The far extremes the narrow centre pushed,
 Squeezed, jammed, cast down, one on the other rose,
 And many a mortal trod on his own nose.
 Each in his eagerness his fellow mashed:
 The sun went down—and all the world was squashed!!!

* The hero of this tale is, or rather was, a real character—(like all the other true heroes in the true tales of this true history.) His name was Peter Fish, a waterman, plying at Hungerford Stairs, and many a time has his wherry borne me over the Thames, when I was a reckless schoolboy. He was a good-humoured soul as ever lived, rather fond of the bottle and a little rhodomontade.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

I wish I could as merry be
As when I set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
On some gay voyage sent.
There Youth spread forth the broad white sail,
Sure of fair weather and full gale,
Confiding life would never fail,
Nor time be ever spent :

And Fancy whistled for the wind ;
And if e'en Memory looked behind,
'Twas but some friendly sight to find,
And gladsome wave her hand ;
And Hope kept whispering in Youth's ear,
To spread more sail and never fear,
For the same sky would still be clear
Until they reached the land.

Health, too, and Strength tugged at the oar,
Mirth mocked the passing billows' roar,
And Joy, with goblet running o'er,
Drank draughts of deep delight ;
And Judgment at the helm they set,
But Judgment was a child as yet,
And, lack-a-day, was all unfit
To guide the boat aright.

Bubbles did half her thought employ,
Hope she believed, she played with Joy,
And Passion bribed her with a toy,
To steer which way he chose.
But still they were a merry crew,
And laughed at dangers as untrue,
Till the dim sky tempestuous grew,
And sobbing south winds rose.

Then Prudence told them all she feared ;
But Youth a while his mesmates cheered,
Until at length he disappeared,
Though none knew how he went.
Joy hung his head, and Mirth grew dull,
Health faltered, Strength refused to pull,
And Memory, with her soft eyes full,
Backward her glance still bent,

To where upon the distant sea,
Bursting the storm's dark canopy,
Light, from a sun none now could see,
Still touched the whirling wave.

And though Hope, gazing from the bow,
Turns off—she sees the shore—to vow,
Judgment, grown older now I trow,
Is silent, stern, and grave.

And though she steers with better skill,
And makes her fellows do her will,
Fear says the storm is rising still,
And day is almost spent.
Oh, that I could as merry be
As when I set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
On some gay voyage sent!

THE PRISON AND THE CASTLE.

For ah ! what is there of inferior birth
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth—
What wretched creature, of what wretched kind,
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind?

POPE'S HOMER.

In such amusements as I have described passed our evenings at Pau ; but the days were generally spent in roaming through the beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood. At length, however, the time for drinking the mineral waters arrived, and we prepared to migrate with the rest. There were two objects, however, in Pau which we had not yet seen.

Hitherto, we had lingered away our time without either visiting the prison or the castle ; and, as we were about to set out the next day for Caunterets, we proceeded to the old château, though the evening was beginning to close in. We were all aware that there was little to be seen, but to have quitted the capital of Bearn without seeing the birthplace of Henry IV. would have been a high offence.

I hate prisons—there is something so repulsive in beholding man debarred the first privilege of nature, that, however necessary it may be to the safety of society, it makes me sick at heart to see it. No man, I have been told, felt this so much as Howard, and it was this

that first caused him to turn the energies of his truly great mind towards alleviating the concomitant misery of those who were already wretched enough.

However, my object was to give my mind as much occupation of every kind as I could, and we accordingly proceeded to the prison, where the first sight that presented itself, was that of a maniac in a frightful state of insanity. We paused for a moment to inquire if nothing could be done for the unhappy being; and then as we were crossing the court, the voice of one of the prisoners singing in the tower above, caught our ear, and we stopped again to listen. The air and the voice were both peculiarly beautiful; and I easily obtained the words, which I now subjoin. I will not attempt to describe the effect of the sight of the maniac and the sound of that song.

PRISONER'S SONG.

1.

I know not, and I care not, how
The hours may pass me by,
Though each may leave upon my brow
A furrow, as they fly;

2.

What matters it? Each still shall take
One link from off the chain
Which binds me to this bitter stake
Of sorrow and of pain.

3.

Time, like a rower, plies his oar,
And all his strokes are hours,
Impelling to a better shore
Of sunshine and of flowers.

4.

I've tasted all that life can give
Of pleasure and of pain;
And is it living, thus to live,
When joys no more remain?

5.

I've tasted woman's ardent lip,
Glowing with love's first fire;
And yet been forc'd the cup to sip
Of coldness or of ire.

6.

All nature has had charms for me,
 The sunshine and the shade ;
 The soaring lark, the roving bee,
 The mountain and the glade.

7.

And I have been the tempest's child,
 And known the lightning's touch :
 Mark'd mid the mad storm's warfare wild
 Too little, or too much.

8.

And I have seen my own blood flow
 Red, in the deadly strife ;
 And others I have taught to know
 How dear they held to life.

9.

I've play'd with being as a toy,
 Till things have lost their form,
 Till danger has become a joy,
 And joy become a storm.

10.

I've lov'd as man has seldom lov'd,
 So deeply, purely, well ;
 I've prov'd what man has seldom prov'd,
 Since first from bliss he fell.

11.

Mine eye again can never see
 What once mine eye has seen ;
 This world to me can never be
 What once this world has been.

12.

Speed on ! oh speed ! my bark, speed on—
 Quick o'er life's troubled waves ;
 The one that comes, the one that's gone,—
 What lies beneath them ! Graves.

The first apartment we were shown into contained the prisoners sentenced to detention for longer or shorter periods, according to their crimes. They were all working hard, and, seemingly, cheerfully ; and the jailer told me, that a great object of those to whom the government of the prison was committed was to give the prisoners habits of industry, and to prevent them, by all means, from becoming utterly debased ; so that, when they again receive their liberty, they may become better members of society instead of worse. Their principal occupation

seemed in strawwork ; and as this is an easy and light task, and fills up the moments which would otherwise prove tedious in confinement, they all appeared rather glad of it than otherwise. A portion of the emolument proceeding from their labour goes towards defraying the expenses of the prison, and a portion is reserved for the prisoner, in order that, when he goes back into the world, he may not again be driven to crime by poverty.

We next visited the apartment where were confined prisoners who had incurred severer punishment. They were generally persons condemned to the galleys for seven years or for life, and were waiting here till their sentence should be put in execution. When we entered there were several groups playing at piquet for sums of one or two sous. Among others was a lawyer, who had been sentenced to the galleys for forgery. I have generally remarked that those condemned for any serious crime have a heavy stupid expression of countenance and dull unmeaning eye ; but this man was an exception. In his face there was plenty of keen, piercing cunning, with a touch of sarcastic bitterness, which showed itself also in his speech. He spoke to us for some time, and, like all villains, tried to darken his view of mankind till it became of the same hue as his own character. He took it for granted that all men were rascals, but only that he had been an unfortunate one.

From hence we went to the dungeons, where still deeper crimes awaited their reward. A damp obscure stone passage led to the cell where two murderers were confined expecting their execution. They were Spaniards, and had left nothing in the perpetration of their crime to excite anything but horror. Their victim had been one of their countrymen, who, having fled from the troubles and dangers which distressed his native land, had contrived to carry away a small sum to support him in his exile ; and this proved the cause of their guilt and of his death. The evidence against them had left not a doubt of the facts, but yet they were suffered to linger on from week to week, not knowing which day would be their last, while (*as we were told*) the Spanish ambassador pleaded their cause at Paris, and endeavoured to procure a commutation of their punishment, on account of their having shown themselves *staunch royalists*. They seemed to be heavily and almost cruelly chained,

but nevertheless to mind it but little, smoking their cigars, and counting their rosaries with great *sang froid*.

I spoke a few words to them in Spanish concerning their situation, to which they replied without any show of feeling, appearing very cheerful, quite careless about dying, and not particularly contrite.

Although there can be no doubt that the long habit of indulging in any passion gives a peculiar expression to the countenance and sometimes even a cast to the features, I put little faith in physiognomy, in the general acceptance of the word; but I could not help remarking, that the heads of these two men were precisely similar to those of all murderers whom I have seen, almost spherical in shape, with the forehead low but rather protuberant, and the eye dull and heavy.

We went next to see the room in the castle where Jeanne d'Albret brought forth the heroic Henry IV., heard the story of her singing even in the pains of childbirth in order that the infant might prove a strong and resolute man, and were gratified with a sight of the tortoise shell in which he was cradled—though be it remarked that one tortoise-shell cradle was burned during the revolution. Afterward, however, the governor of the castle produced the present one as genuine, asserting that the one demolished was not that which had served the monarch for a cradle. Thus that which is shown at present has acquired the additional interest of uncertainty, notwithstanding which, the Bourbon family have surrounded it with gilt helmets and spears, tinsel and tawdry, which might well suit a toyshop, but not the birthplace of Henri Quatre.

As we were to set out very early the next morning for the mountains, we proposed to rest early, but did not fulfil that purpose. On the contrary, we sat late talking over all the pleasant moments which we had snatched from fate, in the little capital of Bearn, and our lucubrations ended in an

ADIEU TO PAU.

ADIEU, perchance for but a day,
Perchance for many a year;
While life's bright part shall slip away,
And Hope shall yield to Memory,
With many a tear.

But if Imagination too,
 Be not among things been,
 Her magic power shall call to view,
 The kind, the good, that brightened you,
 Repeopling the scene.

Adieu, sweet congress of fair things,
 Stream, mountain, valley, plain ;
 And e'en when Time man's winter brings,
 Remembrance still shall lend me wings,
 To visit thee again.

LOURDES.

Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountains clear.

I BELIEVE it to be all the same, after all, whether a man travels or not ; he's a stupid, cross-grained, drudging animal, not half so good as the horse that drags him on his road. Blessed with reason, it serves him less than the instinct of the brute ; with experience constantly flogging him for his errors, he never corrects them ; half of his time he forgets what is right, and when he remembers it he never puts it in practice.

Such were my reflections on finding—what ? that John had forgotten that most indispensable requisite to an Englishman's comfort, the teakettle, at the instant we were leaving Pau. He had done so at every place where he had stopped on the road, and now he had to bring it down stairs, to tie it on the carriage, to cover it with the oilskin, and, in short, to detain the whole party, postillion, and horses, and all, for at least five minutes.

Now, being very well aware that when I begin to moralize on trifles, I am never in the best humour in the world ; and judging by this infallible sign that I was in an ill temper, from having got up at four o'clock in the morning, I placed myself deep in the corner of the carriage, and pretended to fall asleep, for fear I should quarrel with my companion, which, Heaven knows, would have been no easy matter. However, as the carriage drove out of Pau, and began rolling along, in a

dull gray morning, over smooth ground, it became no longer a pretence, and I began seriously to make reparation for my morning's idleness—I mean for not having slept; as I consider not to sleep at the moments properly appropriated for it just as great a piece of idleness as any other misuse than man makes of his time.

I finished my nap as we crossed a bridge over the Gave, not very far from Lastelle. My friend, who, it appears, had occupied himself much like myself, woke up at the same time, and looked back to Pau, which we saw diminishing afar; I am sure we both thought of the friends we left there, of the kindness they had shown to wandering strangers, and the peaceful hours we had known in their society. I may never more see them again; if so, God bless them, for I am sure they deserve it.

It was scarcely past midday when we arrived at Lourdes. The approach is not unlike some of Mrs. Radcliffe's descriptions: the hills beginning to rise high and craggy on each side, with a wild torrent rushing in a valley below; and beyond, the castle of Lourdes, starting up on a high rock in the midst, sometimes seen and sometimes hidden, as the road winds along the side of the mountain. It was market day at Lourdes, and a curious scene, the whole place being impassable for the crowd of the Bearnais, with their Calmuck countenances and broad berrets, and the Bearnaises, each covered with a red or white triangular hood, edged with a black border, hiding the greater part of the head, and falling low down on the shoulders.

I have before mentioned the sightseeing propensities of my companion and myself; and though I had abjured grottoes, as the most unsatisfactory of all things, the first of our movements was towards the "*Spelunque* (or cavern) *du Loup*." It lies some way on the other side of the river; and, on arriving, we found the entrance so low that we were obliged to go in, not upon our hands and knees, but upon our faces. "The guide went first, and then my friend, who is six feet three, so that I thought he would never have done—there was such a quantity of him.

The cave widens rapidly after the entrance, elevating itself to a great height, and resembling in many places the niches and aisles of a Gothic cathedral. In the end it is terminated by a deep well, into which the guide

threw some pieces of stone, which continued echoing, as they fell, for several minutes. But the most curious thing we observed was the soil near the mouth of the grotto, which appeared entirely formed from the fragments of insects. We examined several portions of this black sort of earth, and uniformly found it composed of parts of the legs, wings, and corslets, of what had apparently been small beetles.

After the cavern, we went, in a different direction, to visit a lake said to occupy the spot where a mountain once stood, which suddenly disappeared at the time of an earthquake. The only beauty of the place was the reflection of the hills around in the deep smooth water, and one might almost fancy they saw the ghost of the vanished mountain haunting its old abode and looking up from the bottom of the lake.

The whole country round is strewed with old towers and castles, which have been erected at different periods ; some to check the descent of the mountaineers, who used here, as well as in Scotland, to exact a kind of black mail from the inhabitants of the low lands ; some to guard against the Moors, who, during their residence in Spain, used frequently to invade and ravage the country ; and some are even attributed to the Romans, but I should think, from their appearance, with little foundation for the supposition.

However, like all mountaineers, the people are full of old legends ; and ancient superstitions, driven from the more civilized globe, seem to have refuged themselves in the obscurity of these unfrequented hills.

They tell a droll story of the lord of one of the old castles of which I have just spoken, not at all unlike "Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogene," but still more like the story of the noble Morringer.

THE DEVIL AND THE CRUSADER.

Ae day as the earle gaed up the lang glen,
 Hey and the rue grows bonny wi' thyme,
 He met wi' Auld Nick, wha said, How do ye fen,
 And the thyme it is withered and rue is in prime.
 I've got a bad wife, sir, that's a' my complaint,
 Hey and the rue grows bonny wi' thyme,
 For, saving your presence, to her ye're a saint,
 And the thyme it is withered and rue is in prime.

Kellyburn Braes.

In those good old times, so much to be regretted, when every noble had the right and privilege of administering justice or injustice on his own vassals, when hanging was in the hands of the gentry, and law in the mouth of every feudal chief—when the crumbling towers, where the moping owl now sits in melancholy solitude, were people with the gay, and the bright, and the fair—when the courts where the lonely wind whistles as in mockery of their emptiness, resounded to the clang of arms and the voice of the trumpet—when feast and revel filled those halls, where now sits nothing but silence and desolation; the bravest of the brave was the lord of the Château de B——, and the fairest of the fair was his lady. Beauty and wit were hers, and courage and wealth were his, and all thought the marquis the happiest of mortals, except himself. How it came about, and why, does not appear; but a violent hatred took place between the marquis and a neighbouring baron, but histories do not mention that the marchioness participated in her husband's dislike.

Some said that the marquis was jealous, and called him "poor man!" but as if to give them all the lie, and prove that he loved his wife dearly, and suspected her not at all, he came to a sudden resolution to call together his vassals and retainers and join the crusade, for it was just about this time that Peter the Hermit went through Europe like a mad dog, infecting everybody with a desire to bite the Saracens. Every wise man makes a will, and the marquis, wisely calculating that a man who goes to cut other folk's throats may find some one by

the way to cut his own, caused to be made and delivered his last will and testament, leaving all his goods and effects, real and personal, to his dearly beloved wife in case of his death; and further, adding a proviso, that if he did not return, or send a messenger announcing his existence within seven years, she might look upon him as dead to all intents and purposes, and marry again to her heart's content: but he made it a private request, that she would never espouse the obnoxious baron, which she promised faithfully not to do.

Now, when the will was made, as above stated, by the marquis's chaplain, who could read and write, the marquis, who could not, made a cross at the bottom, and stamped the wax with the pommel of his sword, and the marchioness kissed her lord, and wept bitterly to think of his dying at all.

At length the dreaded day of departure came. The vassals and retainers marched out of the castle in gallant array, and the marquis's page told him that his charger was prepared, whereupon the marchioness fainted—dead as a stone. The marquis waited till she had recovered, and then snatched himself away, and departed, while the marchioness, with flowing tears and streaming hair, stood in the highest tower watching the horsemen till the top of the last spear was hid behind the mountain, and then she came down, and said to the servant, "At home to nobody but the baron."

* * * * *

In the mean time the marquis joined the crusaders, arrived safely in the Holy Land, and for some time performed prodigies of valour; till at length one of these same prodigies conducted him into a Saracen prison, where he lingered, like good King Lusignan, living principally upon roasted chestnuts and mare's milk, for there were no cows in Jerusalem. His fortitude would have melted a heart of stone; but as it did not melt the stones of the prison, it served him but little, although being of an ingenious turn, he used occasionally to carve figures on little sticks, and make whistles out of a marrow bone, when he could get one.

In these dignified employments had the marquis expended many years, and memory, who impudently keeps throwing in our teeth all that is disagreeable, could not forbear telling him, that the sun had seven times run his course since last he left his mountain castle in the Py-

renees; and on this was he meditating, when suddenly up started a gentleman, whom he instantly perceived to be the devil.

There is no one more ill used, in my opinion, than the above-named personage. However broad his back may be, surely all the sins that are laid to his charge, and of which he is as innocent as the child unborn, are well sufficient to bow it. The poor devil! Oh luxury, pride, vainglory, avarice, anger, hatred, revenge, and all uncharitableness; what, what would ye do if ye had not his shoulders to cast your burden upon? *Oh vanitas vanitatis!* But as I was saying, the devil walked into the dungeon, whereupon the crusader crossed himself. "My dear sir," said his black majesty, "don't disturb yourself; such old friends ought not to stand upon ceremonies."

The crusader made him a low bow, saying, that the devil really had the advantage of him, and that he was not aware of having the pleasure of his acquaintance.

"Not personally, indeed," said the devil, "but you have done me so much service one way or another, that I owe you some return. You stare, my dear sir, but you have sent to my dominions, with your own hand, three-and-thirty Saracens, two renegades, and an atheist. Between you and me, it is all the same to me," said the devil, "of what religion they are, so that I have them safe; and now I have got to give you a piece of news and make you a proposal." And then the devil—whether it was that he does not patronize love of any kind, or whether he thought that the marchioness had had enough of it to answer his purpose, or what, I don't know, but he told the marquis, that as he had neither returned nor sent during seven years, his wife was that very night going to give her hand to the obnoxious baron, and he further offered to carry him back instantly to his own château in the Pyrenees, if they could agree upon the terms.

This tickled the marquis's fancy, but the devil was rather exorbitant, demanding the knight's heart and soul. The crusader replied, that his heart was his king's, and his soul was his God's, and so that would not do. The devil then asked for all his wealth at his death, and to be instantly installed his chaplain, if he could prove that he had taken orders. The marquis answered, "*L'habit ne fait pas le moine.*" The devil then

made several other proposals, but the knight was a stickler, and did not think a bad wife worth much. So at last the devil took off his hat, saying, "What your honour pleases," leaving it to his own generosity; and the crusader, who had learned to be a screw, said he would only give him the remains of his supper.

"You are a hard man," said the devil; "but never mind! jump up!" and down he bent his back for the marquis to mount. The knight sprang into the seat, stuck his knees into the devil's sides, and away they went like a flash of lightning till they arrived at the château, where they put the good people in no small confusion. The knight walked first and the devil came after, and all the servants ran into the banquet hall, crying, "The marquis! the marquis!" Up jumped the baron, up jumped the marchioness, up jumped the guests.

The marquis's movements were rather rapid. He walked into the hall, claimed his wife, kicked the baron, wished the company good-night, overturned the supper table and spoiled the supper, so that when order was restored and he called for something to eat, there was nothing to be had but a dozen of nuts and a bottle of wine. The knight cracked the nuts, but, according to his bargain, took care to throw the shells over his shoulder for the devil, and when he had drank his wine, threw the bottle behind him too: but the devil was too old a bird to be caught with chaff, and had been gone half an hour before. So the crusader pulled off his boots and went to bed.

ARGELES.

*Et nunc omnis ager nunc omnis parurit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ nunc formosissimus annus.*

VIRGIL.

THERE WAS nothing more to be seen at Lourdes but the castle, and as that is now used only as a state prison we did not visit it. In scenes where liberty seems the charter of the place, as it does in these mountains, its

loss is doubly dreadful. Besides, we had seen enough of prisons at Pau.

At Lourdes the Pyrenees really begin, in this direction, and from thence to Argelès we passed through a valley which made us feel the whole force and truth of the expression of "*a smiling country*." Richly cultivated at their bases, on each side rise mountains, covered with fields of somewhat less luxuriance to their very summits. Yet they lose none of their character of mountains, for from the midst of a smooth verdant turf, a mass of cold rugged rock will ever and anon break out and hang frowning over the road; and in other places, where the mountaineers have carried up the vegetable mould to the top of the crags, which they frequently do, a small green meadow will appear spreading soft and rich in the midst of perfect desolation. At the farther extremity, the view penetrates into several other valleys, which give long perspectives of hills sloping to meet hills, and far passes winding on into the misty distance, till some obtrusive mountain comes with its blue head and shuts the scene.

Frequent villages are strewed all through the valley of Argelès, and every now and then some old ruin raises itself from among the trees, connecting the history of the past with the present beauties of the scene. The tower of Vidalos forms a striking object all along the road, standing on a wooded height in the midst, and seen from every part of the valley.

The best and most extensive view near Argelès, is from an elevation to the northwest of the town, called Le Balandrau, and certainly it commands one of the most splendid panoramas that can be conceived. Here, as in all the valleys of the Pyrenees, a mountain torrent runs in the midst; the lower part is filled with towns, and villages, and woods; convents, and ruins, and feudal castles rise next, with the hamlets they formerly protected still clinging around them; and above, on every side, are seen the immense mountains over which the industry of man has spread a rich robe of cultivation. The sun, as it wanders over them, entirely changes their aspect, from time to time, without, however, robbing them of their beauty; sometimes, throwing them into deep shadow, all the minute parts are lost in one grand obscurity—sometimes, shining full upon them, a thousand objects of interest are displayed, softened and har-

monized as they recede by the airy indistinctness of distance.

It had been our intention to proceed direct from Lourdes to Caunterets, but there was a charm in the valley of Argelès which there was no resisting, and we dismissed the horses, resolving to stay at the little inn, however bad the accommodation might be. But we were agreeably disappointed in our *auberge*. The people were civil and attentive, the beds clean and good, the prices moderate, and, even had we been true French *gastrophonomes*, we must have been well contented with our fare.

We spent the day in wandering about the valley, seeking for new beauties, and enjoying all we saw; and in the evening retired to rest full of ideas of loveliness, and contented with the day.

CAUTERETS.

"Hic secura quies et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum, hic latis otia fundis
Speluncæ, vivique lacus, hic frigida Tempus."

VIRGIL.

THE next morning we proceeded to Pierrefitte, and while some little alteration was taking place in the harness before we could go on towards Caunterets, a gendarme came up and asked for our passports. I luckily had mine in my pocket, though it had never been signed for the Pyrenees, but it answered very well, and was civilly returned, scarcely looked at. Not so happened it to a poor traveller on foot, who it appeared had no passport to show. When a man is in the wrong, and wishes to go on in the same way, he has but two resources, to bully or sneak. The poor traveller chose the first, and a violent quarrel ensued with the gendarme, who swore that he should not proceed one step without showing his passport, called out very loud about doing his duty, slapped his hand upon his heart, and talked about his honour. Finding that bully would not answer, the traveller had nothing for it but to sneak; so he asked the gendarme to

VOL. II.—O

come and drink a bottle of wine with him. The *gendarme* did not accept the invitation, but he drank the wine, and the traveller, having paid for it, walked on upon his way, while the other remained on the spot, to prove, to all who doubted it, what an honourable man he was, and how well he did his duty.

When the harness was all completely arranged, we passed on through the little town, and, turning to the right, entered the gorge of Cauterets. Here again was a new change of mountain-scenery, gaining in grandeur what is lost in richness and cultivation. From *Pierrefitte* the road suddenly turns into a deep ravine, with the river rushing below, and immense masses of crag rising many hundred feet above. But it is not even here the bare, cold, lifeless stone. Every spot where the root of a tree can fix itself, every ledge where the least earth can rest, is abundant in vegetable life, and all sorts of beautiful foliage seem striving to form a screen for the gray rock from which they spring. The road winds on through this sort of scenery, changing at every step, till, approaching Cauterets, the valley gradually widens, and again high mountains surround it on every side, but far bolder than those of *Argelès*, and covered near the tops with dark forests of pines and sapins.

Cauterets is a complete watering-place, a sort of barrack, which gets filled to the head the moment that fashion gives orders to march from the greater cities. As soon as the sound of the postman's whip was heard, all the inhabitants rushed to the windows to see who was to be added to their little world; and amid the number of white bonnets and blue, red bonnets and gray, which Paris had brought forth and Cauterets contained, we were fortunate enough to discover two or three with the owners of which we could claim acquaintance; and then there was pulling off of hats, and bowing of heads, and so forth, while a thousand gaping applicants stood round the carriage pressing for our "*linge à blanchir*," or for us to "*manger chez eux*," so that there was practice enough in the art of refusing to train one for a prime minister.

We put up at the hotel of old Madame Lapierre, who is an original in her way. Some fifty years ago (I suppose) she kept a little *auberge* at Cauterets, when Cauterets was scarcely heard of. She has grown into op-

ulence as it has grown in fame and size, and now is one of the richest persons of the place. But still little Madame Lapierre retains all her old habits; six days of the week trots about the kitchen in her original dirt, peeps into the saucepans, counts the onions, and scolds the servants, and the seventh puts on a clean muslin cap, and brings in one of the dishes herself to show how fine she is. Withal she really is a very good old soul, civil, kind, and obliging; the only thing is, that there is no understanding a word that she says, for speaking *patois* sixty or seventy years has broken all the teeth out of her head, and spoiled her articulation.

Cauterets was as full as it could be. The violent hot weather had driven all the world out of large towns, and health, pleasure, curiosity, and fashion brought them all to the Pyrenees. Truly, truly, they could not have chosen a sweeter spot; grandeur and beauty become so familiar to the eye, that all the rest of the world does indeed look "stale, flat, and unprofitable." Besides, there are a thousand little lovely nooks unhackneyed by itineraries, which one is constantly finding out for one's self. I hate itineraries; they are a sort of Newgate Calendar, a record of all the common tours which have been executed for the last century. The Pyrenees have been but little tourified, or, if they have, I knew nothing about it, which came to the same thing.

There is a great difference between the Alps and the Pyrenees; the Alps are a country of mountains, the Pyrenees a chain. In Switzerland one is obliged to go to seek mountains—in the Pyrenees they start forward upon one; all that is beautiful and sublime is near at hand, and nature seems fond of changing from one form of grandeur to another.

Cauterets is surrounded on every side by majestic hills, and the walk to each of the sulphureous springs, of which there are several, displays new beauties at every step. That called La Raillère is the most frequented, and beyond it is a rich woody scene, dim and still, with the river divided into three or four streams, breaking over a high crag, and then foaming on under a small bridge of planks, which leads across from one rock to another. To the left lies a beautiful valley, to which we made an excursion with all the gay folks of the place. The ladies were carried in machines called *chaises à porteurs*, consisting simply of chairs fixed on

poles, and covered in with oil-cloth on all sides but one ; these are carried between two men, whose dexterity is wonderful, bearing their burden up steep rocks and over broken crags which seem quite impassable. Altogether they are not ugly in a landscape ; and as we pedestrians stood upon the top of the hill, and watched two-and-twenty of them following more slowly up the winding ascent, it had a very curious and pleasing effect. The pleasure of our party, however, was soon spoiled by a heavy rain, which came on and drove us back towards the town. Unfortunately, this is too frequent an occurrence in mountainous countries ; and though the Pyrenees are less subject to it than many other places, they still are by no means exempt.

Though, in all probability, the good effect produced by visiting these waters is more to be attributed to the exercise, fine air, and beautiful scenery, than the benign influence of the nymph, yet I have seen two or three glasses from the well of La Raillère act in an extraordinary manner upon one of my friends, enabling him to walk for many miles without fatigue, which his health would not have permitted without some strong stimulus. However, the effects generally attributed to these fountains of the Pyrenees are rather amusing. The accounts published of them begin like the puff of a French charlatan, who states, that though some men make extravagant pretensions for their nostrum, that is not his case ; there are only one or two diseases which his remedy is adapted to cure ; and then he goes on to recite all the maladies incident to human nature.

The waters of Cauterets are thus stated to be specific in wounds, rheumatisms, affections of the liver and the spleen, intermittent fevers, consumption, diseases of the skin, and paralyses ; and "&c." is put at the end to gratify the imagination of the reader, in case he should have any nondescript complaint which has not been enumerated.

THE LAC DE GAUB.

"Care selve beate
 E voi solinghi e taciturni orrori
 Di riposi e di pace alberghi veri
 O quanto volentieri
 A rivedervi io torno."

GUARINI.

It often happens in the Pyrenees, that the place one goes to see is less worth seeing than the road which leads to it. We set out early in the morning for the Lac de Gaub, and passing the principal fountain of Caunterets, turned to the right, where the path wound in amid enormous rocks and forests of sapins, with not a vestige left of the civilized world,—all wild, and rough, and desolate, with the high peaks of the mountains almost shutting out the rays of the sun. The road, if it can be called a road, appears almost impracticable even on foot, but our guides told us that the Spanish mules are frequently driven along it, and I have more than once since seen the Spaniards pass it on horseback.

The river, during its course through this valley, forms four principal cascades. The first, called "De Cerizet," is very beautiful, falling headlong down through a deep cleft in the rock, which is entirely covered with dark woods. The second, called "Le Pas de l'Ours," is connected with the other by the very tragical history of a poor bear. Be it known, then, that at the first waterfall, grew in days of yore a wild cherry-tree, from which, by corruption, it acquired the name of Cerizet. It was first of all "La Cascade du Cerisier," the cata-ract of the cherry-tree, and from its root etymologists will have no difficulty in deriving "La Cascade de Cerizet." A poor bear, who, like Parnell's hermit, far in a wild remote from public view, had grown from youth to age in harmless simplicity, was wont every day to descend from his mountain hermitage and make a frugal meal upon the cherries that grew beside the fall.

However, it so unfortunately happened, that bruin was induced to vary his diet. The demon came tempt-
 ing him in the shape of a shepherd and a flock of sheep;

and luxury, that most penetrating evil, found its way even up to his cave, whispering that every country gentleman ought to kill his own mutton.

Bruin suffered himself to be seduced by the charms of one of the sheep. It is supposed that, finding his virtue failing, he resolved to fly, but lingered still to give it one last embrace. However that may be, the separation was too cruel for either to bear, and his tender friend expired in his arms. Heart-stricken, bruin carried her mortal remains to his cave; and for some days was so overpowered with grief, that he abandoned his favourite walk to the cherry-tree cascade. At length, however, he once more took his way towards it, but ah, hapless tale! the cruel shepherd had watched his path, and dug away the support from the very stone over which his way lay as he passed the second cascade. Bruin advanced, ruminating over his lost mutton;—he put his two fore-feet upon the treacherous stone;—the stone gave way, and down he rolled headlong into the torrent, paying dear for not having contented himself with cherries.

The Pas de l'Ours, unconnected with its little tragedy, would be less interesting and is less beautiful than the fall of the Pont d'Espagne, where the path, passing over the stream by a little wooden bridge, leads through the Port de Cauterets into Spain. Here two rivers flowing diagonally through long mountain passes, till they come near the brink of a precipice, plunge over the edge of the rock, and meet in the deep chasm below, foaming and thundering as they join. Nothing can be more magnificent than to stand on the few unshaped trunks of trees which form the bridge, and look down upon the meeting of the waters, for ever rushing on with a dazzling whiteness and unceasing roar, while a thousand flowers are growing peacefully on the very brink, and a variety of shrubs and trees are dipping their branches in the spray.

When we were there the sun shone strongly on the mist which the fall raises, and arched it with a sunbow, that hung flickering over the waters like the banner of the contending streams.

The road, which had been ascending all the way, now began to mount rapidly, as if seeking the very clouds, and in about half an hour we reached the small mountain lake called the *Lac de Gaub*, situated at a great

height above the level of the sea, but surrounded by hills still more elevated. It is calm, silent, and solitary; though the turf that dips itself in the clear waters of the lake is carpeted with a thousand flowers of every hue, and living with many a painted butterfly, yet there is a solemn stillness in the whole, which makes one afraid of speaking for fear of breaking the silence which has dwelt for ages among those mountains. The waters, too, harmonized with the rest; they were deep, clear, and calm, without a ripple upon their bosom. I could have fancied them the waters of oblivion, and took a draught to try, but it did not answer. The only living being in the place appeared to be a solitary fisherman, who makes his abode in a miserable hut by the side of the lake. He is the picture of Charon, and looks withered and blackened by solitude.

His dwelling, which was built of rough stones piled one on the other, boasted neither window nor chimney. The light entered by an aperture in the wall, turned from the prevailing wind; and the smoke escaped or not, as it liked best, by a hole in the roof, made for its convenience; and yet "canopies of costly state" would not, perhaps, have rendered our fisherman a happier man. He had a dry and caustic humour about him, which might spring from the concentration of his own thoughts in his loneliness; and of the economy of human life he had at least acquired so much knowledge as to cheat his fellow-creatures with as little remorse as he hooked a trout.

ST. SAUVEUR.

"Interno a queste fonti siedono sempre
 Bei damigelli e candide donzelle
 Tenere e fresche e di leggiadro aspetto
 Che invitan tutti a ber quell' acque dolce."
 TRESSINO. L'ITALIA LIBERATA DA GOTI.

Rumour, that winged demon, whose business and pleasure it is to torment man, like a gnat that comes just when he is enjoying his morning's sleep, and, buzzing for ever about him, sings its indistinct song in his ears, till he has neither rest nor peace, came tormenting us at Caunterets with the news of St. Sauveur being so full, that if we did not put horses to the carriage, and set out without delay, we should find ourselves worse off in point of lodging than even where we were, although my friend was obliged to go into his room sideways, for fear of knocking down some of the utensils, and I might have just as well been in an oven, for I was precisely above the kitchen fire.

I have just been bleeding one of my candles. The wax had gained so much upon the wick that it was ready to die of repletion, till, making an incision with the point of the snuffers, I let out a sufficient quantity to relieve it, and the flame burnt up brighter than before. I cannot help thinking that man is like a candle. The cold part is his body, the melted spermaceti is his blood, the wick is his brain, and the flame, though chymists prove it to be only the combustion of gas, produces light and heat, of which we know nothing, any more than of the spirit.

So we set off from Caunterets as hard as we could drive; but before we got to Pierrefitte my friend's strength failed him, and we were obliged to stop at that town for the night.

From Gavarnie to Lourdes may be considered as forming but one valley,—sometimes, indeed, contracting into narrow passes, sometimes opening into wide basins, but always marked, or rather connected, by the river, which, entering at the Cascade of Gavarnie, flows on in nearly a direct line to Lourdes.

At Pierrefitte the valley contracts to a deep gorge, like that which leads to Caunterets, but the scenery round bears a softer character. The defile is much narrower, the hills more green and smiling, and though, perhaps, the whole may be more beautiful, it appears to want grandeur after having seen Caunterets. For some way the road winds round the projecting bases of the hills, till at length it opens upon the beautiful valley of Luz, presenting a rich scene, not unlike the basin of Argelès. Here also scattered villages and ruined castles are the first things that present themselves, and shortly after appears the town of Luz, in the lower part of the valley, and St. Sauveur on an eminence to the right. The latter is a beautiful little place, consisting of nineteen or twenty houses, nested in a woody part of the mountain, and looking far over the scene of loveliness around.

We arrived just in time to be too late; the lodgings which we expected to find vacant had been taken by some one else; and we were obliged to put up much in the same way that we had done at Caunterets; but the place was so beautiful, so smiling, so cheerful in itself, that we could not be out of humour with any thing in it.

Madame de Gontaut Biron, one of the most amiable beings I ever met, has made St. Sauveur her favourite summer abode, and has taken pains to display its beauties to the greatest advantage. She has planned and carried into execution many of the principal embellishments of the place; and Madame de Gontaut's bridge, and Madame de Gontaut's seat, and Madame de Gontaut's walks, are always the most beautiful that can be found. Her rank and her fortune gave her the means of making herself respected, but she has used them to a better purpose, and made herself loved. She combines all the high *ton*, the uncommunicable ease and elegance of a woman to whom courts have ever been familiar, with a degree of originality and *bonhomie* which takes off from the flatness of great polish. She knows every poor person in the village; and if they are sick or in distress, it is to Madame de Gontaut that they fly for assistance. She relieves their wants, she promotes their happiness, she looks upon them as her children, and they almost worship her. Hers is not alone that sort of general charity, which gives but for the sake of giving, with-

out knowledge of the object or interest in the distress : she discriminates in her bounty, and doubles it by the manner in which it is done ; for her words are as kind as her actions. I have met her often going down to the Springs, leaning on the arm of one of the common porters of the place, asking after his family, inquiring into his affairs, and advising him in their regulation with as much kindness as if he had been her son.

There is all the difference in the world between the benevolence which cheers and raises its object and the charity which humiliates.

A custom exists at St. Sauveur of bowing to every lady one meets in the street. Now, as the whole town is not two hundred yards long, and it is crammed as full as it can hold, one may calculate fairly upon having to pull off one's hat at least a hundred times whenever a necessity exists of walking from one end to the other on a sunshiny morning. God knows I did not grudge it them, but it ought to be put into the list of expenses. My companion did much better, for he walked about the town with his hat under his arm, which did just as well.

B A R É G E S.

"*Quis tumidum guttur miratur in albis ?*"

JUVENAL.

It is an extraordinary fact, that between the Valley d'Ossau and the Valley de Baréges, an entire change takes place in the population. I never saw a handsomer race than the people at the Eaux Bonnes and the Eaux Chaudes. At Cauterets beauty had forsaken the fair sex : the men were well-formed and good-looking, but the women quite the reverse ; and at St. Sauveur, Luz, and Baréges, men, women, and children were all ugly together. A few days after our arrival at St. Sauveur we went over to Baréges, which is but at a little distance, and on our road met all the goblin shapes of fairy tales completely realized, and a great many more far too disgusting for description. •

In this neighbourhood there are a great many people

afflicted with the goitre. Nor had I any idea of its effects till I saw it here. This monstrous appendage to each side of the neck is horrid in itself, but those afflicted with it to any great degree lose entirely the hue of health, become squalid and emaciated, and very frequently end in idiocy. There is no describing their appearance; and one can scarcely wonder at the treatment the ignorant mountaineers used to show them of old, considering them cursed of God, and driving them from all human intercourse.

The Cretins, or idiots, are also very common in the Pyrenees, and a large village near Bagnères de Bigorre is almost entirely peopled with them. But these wretched beings are not at all held in the same degree of horror as the Caghots, or goitrous, who for many centuries were supposed, even by the physicians of the towns adjacent to the Pyrenees, to be the descendants of persons afflicted with the leprosy of the Greeks. It appears, however, to be now ascertained, that this disease proceeds from something suspended in the water of mountainous countries, which, being taken into the system, produces these obstructions of the glands. Knowing very little either of medicine or chymistry, my inquiries of course were limited; but from what I have been able to learn, the malady is confined to particular districts, both in the Alps and Pyrenees, while others in the vicinity are quite free from it. In Derbyshire the same disease is common, while in the mountains of Scotland and Wales I believe it is little known. An analytical comparison of the water of the districts in which this malady prevails might throw great light upon the subject, and be of much service to a portion of mankind, who, though happily not very numerous, are well worthy of compassion on account of their sufferings.

The road to Baréges is not particularly beautiful, and the town itself is hideous. Two rows of ill-built houses, forced into a narrow space between the river and the mountain, crammed full of the sick and the maimed, is what Baréges appears at first sight. Its mineral springs are the strongest in the Pyrenees, and famous for the cure of gunshot wounds. There is a large hospital for soldiers, who saunter up and down the single street, in which scarcely a whole man is to be met with at once; and yet Baréges is the gayest place

in the country; there is nothing but balls and parties every night. In short, it is a great dancing hospital, in which all the world caper on in the best way they can with such limbs as they have left.

Such is Barèges in the summer; in the winter every one quits it, except a few shepherds and a few bears, who take possession of the empty houses while the snow lasts. Every thing at Barèges is made to be carried away—shutters, doors, windows, and even stair-cases, so that nothing but the skeleton of a town is left when once the migration begins. Two things render it nearly uninhabitable after October—the tremendous overflowings of the river and the avalanches, called here *lavanges*, which frequently destroy great part of the town. It is not alone that they overwhelm all that they approach; but, as they come, every thing trembles and falls before they touch it, without it be of the most solid construction. Such is the report of the country people, who, in their figurative language, say that all nature fears the *lavange*; but any effect of the kind must proceed from the pressure of the air by the rapid progress of such an immense mass. Many efforts have been made to guard Barèges from this calamity by means of planting trees on the heights; but, as seldom a year passes without its occurrence, the young trees can afford no obstacle to the avalanche.

GAVARNIE.

“Alps trown on Alps, or rushing hideous down,
As if old Chaos was again returned,
Wide rend the deep and shake the solid pole.”

THOMSON.

IN returning to St. Sauveur we saw the mountains in whose breast it rests as they ought to be seen to know them in their greatest magnificence. It was about half past two, and the sun shone in such a manner as to cast a kind of blue airy indistinctness over the whole, hiding all the minuter parts, and leaving them in grand dark masses, marked decidedly upon the bright sunshiny sky.

Although we had risen considerably from Luz, the sun was already hidden by the mountains to the southwest, and all the valley was in shadow. As I have before remarked, when the hills are seen covered with fields half way to the top, scattered all over with trees, or broken into separate masses of rock, the multitude of objects prevents the eye from estimating their height justly; but it is when they are thus thrown together, in one uniformity of shade, that they appear in their true grandeur.

But as I have got upon my hands a long journey to the most splendid of nature's works, I must proceed on my way as quickly as possible. It would be tedious to describe the journey from St. Sauveur to Gedre, as it is little better than a repetition of that from Pierrefitte to Luz on a smaller scale. The passes are narrower, the basins more circumscribed, and the mountains rise higher and more perpendicularly on each side. The road, which soon becomes unfit for a carriage, sometimes sinks to a level with the Gave, and sometimes rises high on the sides of the mountain; and as my horse had a talent for stumbling, together with a peculiar predilection for the edge of the precipice, the ensurance upon my neck would have been somewhat hazardous. Of course, during a twelve miles' ride through that part of the country, we found a great many spots of peculiar beauty; but if I were to tell all I saw, I should never have done with the long stories of lovely hamlets nested in the wood that overhangs the stream, and marble bridges that carry the road across it, and rugged mountain-heads that hide it from the sun.

At Gedre there is a famous grotto, which every one talks about a great deal more than it deserves. A deep cleft in the rock, overhung with wood, admits the Gave de Héas to the valley, where it joins the other river. There is a great degree of soft quiet and stillness in the sound of the waterfall, and the deep shade of the wood hanging down and dipping its branches in the clear pools formed at the foot of the rock. The whole is certainly very beautiful, but not meriting the extravagant praises which have been bestowed upon it.

At this village, Gedre, is the last general bureau of the French *douanes*, and here we were obliged to take out a kind of passport for our horses, that they might be allowed to return. Here also I engaged a guide,
VOL. II.—P

named Rondo, to conduct me the next morning to the Brèche de Roland; and we then proceeded on our way, skirting along the foot of Mount Coumelie, till we arrived at a spot called the Chaos or Payrada, which seems as if a mountain had been violently overthrown, and strewed the valley with its enormous ruins. Blocks of granite, containing from ten to a hundred thousand cubic feet, scattered at large or piled one upon another, fill up a space of nearly half a mile. No tree, no vegetation is to be seen; all is death, and desolation, and silence, except where the Gave rushes angrily through the rocks, and seems to hasten its progress to escape from such a wilderness of destruction.

About a mile more brought us to the village of Gavarnie, wildly situated in the midst of flowers and snows, soft fields and tremendous mountains.

THE CASCADE OF GAVARNIE.

"Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."

HORAT. EPIST.

THE village of Gavarnie once belonged to the order of the Temple, and we were shown the little church said to have been erected by those military monks. There is nothing peculiar in the building, and the only thing which pretends to interest is a collection of skulls, said to be those of eight knights who were beheaded on the little green at the time of the barbarous extermination of their order. I believe that, as far as any truth goes, they might just as well call them the heads of eight Roman emperors. But it is no great matter—could every Templar come back and swear to his own, they would be the only persons concerned after all; and till that can be the case, one head does quite as well as another.

After visiting the church, we followed the course of the river towards the famous Cirque de Gavarnie. On setting out from the village it seemed as if we could touch it; but it fled before us, and shortly a thick cloud came over it like a veil. We walked on, however,

crossing several large basins which had formerly been filled with water, and arrived at last in the midst of that gigantic amphitheatre, to which all other of nature's works appear but faint essays of her power. The whole was at first filled with the cloud, and we could scarcely distinguish any of the objects around; but gradually the vapour rose and passed away, and we found ourselves standing in the midst of a semicircle of black marble, rising abruptly fourteen hundred feet in height, round an area of nearly a league. There is no describing it; the soul is lost in the vastness that it contemplates, and it is long before the eye can comprehend the grandeur of the objects before it. High above the amphitheatre lies the mountain, pile upon pile, to the very sky, like gigantic steps carpeted with snow. Nine or ten small streams are continually pouring over the edge of the precipice, and tracing a long white line upon its dark surface; but a river, far more considerable than the rest, shoots over the eastern side of the amphitheatre from a height of twelve hundred and sixty feet, forming the famous cascade of Gavarnie.

There was still a line of heavy cloud drawn across the very summit of the fall, and below it separated into dense thick mist, while the stream itself continued for ever pouring silently on between the two, like time between two indistinct eternities. At the same time the sun had long, long sunk to us, and the world below was all in shadow, while far above the cloud, glittering in a kind of golden splendour, rose the icy summits of a far higher mountain, beaming with an airy unearthly light, like the faint glimpse of some more brilliant world.

Description can do nothing for it, imagination can do little. It must be seen and felt.

Although such towering heights still remained above us, we had already risen so far that we found the snows lying at the foot of the amphitheatre, and were told that they never melt. After falling from the height, the river collects in a small basin below, and forcing its passage under the snow, forms the famous Pont de Neige* of Gavarnie.

Far above the Cirque de Gavarnie, and the snows and the ices which hang upon its edge, appears another perpendicular wall of rock, running along nearly from east

* Bridge of snow.

to west, and forming a barrier between France and Spain; and nearly in the centre of this appears a deep cleft like an embrasure—the famous Brèche de Roland. For here it is said that the Paladin Orlando, or Roland, as he is called in France, pursuing the army of the Moors, cleft the rock of three hundred feet in height with one blow of his enchanted sword, and opened a passage into Spain. The story goes on to say that Orlando was on horseback.

I looked in vain to see the footpath that was to conduct me the next day to the breach. I could discover nothing but one perpendicular precipice, and returned to Gavarnie, puzzling myself how it was to be accomplished.

THE BRECHE DE ROLAND.

"E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend,
And placed on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where a hundred realms appear,
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extended wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride."

GOLDSMITH.—*The Traveller.*

WHILE we were at dinner, my musical-named guide, Rondo, arrived from Gedre, and came in to speak to me, walking with the peculiar bounding step of mountaineers. A picturesque figure he was too, with his spear-headed pole, conical cap, cowskin sandals, and an elegant bissack of netted cotton, which hung under his left arm. He was a small, slightly-made mountaineer, with pale dark complexion, bright black eyes, and a countenance lit up with calm intelligence. He told us so many stories of accidents from storms in attempting to reach the Brèche, that my companion, whose health utterly prevented him from ascending, became alarmed on my account, and begged me not to go unless the day should prove perfectly clear.

At half past three the next morning, Rondo called me; and having dressed myself as warmly as possible, I went down stairs in the dark. The stairs led imme-

diately into the middle of the kitchen, on the floor of which were stretched the beds of half a dozen families belonging to the inn. There were mine host and hostess, her sister and her sister's husband, and two or three cousins and their partners, on either side; quite patriarchal. I don't know whether this proceeded from the inn being very full, or whether it was usual; but so it was, that in the obscurity I tripped at the first mattress, and tumbled head foremost between a young lady and her husband, causing a sudden and violent separation, and certainly putting asunder those whom the church had joined together. The young lady started up, and I believe at first, as there was no seeing in the matter, took me for her husband, so that her first address was rather more tender than it otherwise would have been; but at that moment Rondo came in with a light, *sans cérémonie*, and enabled me to extricate myself from my very doubtful situation.

We now provided ourselves with the necessary implements for our journey; spear-headed poles, *crampons* for our feet, a bottle of brandy, and some cold meat; and setting out from Gavarnie, soon arrived at the foot of the Tours de Marborée. The morning was foggy, and by this time it had begun to drizzle; Rondo shook his head at the weather, saying that we should have a storm; so we sat down among the flowers with which the whole place was carpeted, and held a council of war.

The mountaineers always use the most figurative language, and my guide explained to me his apprehensions, saying, that when the French mist meets the Spanish mist on the top of the mountain, they fight for the breach with thunder and with hail; that there had been threatening of war in the sky for many days, but that now it menaced more than ever; and that if the storm came when we were amid the glaciers, where there was no shelter, death would be our portion; for that was a country, he said, where there was no good God.

However, never liking to give up what I have once undertaken without succeeding, and as it appeared that if the storm overtook us before we reached the ice, we could find some place of refuge from the hail, which was the most dangerous enemy we had to encounter; I determined to go on, at least as far as the snow, and

then let our further progress be determined by the weather.

Our first effort was to pass a hill composed of loose fragments of stone, which gave way at every step. This conducted us to the foot of the precipice, on the west side, where we paused under a shelving rock till the rain had somewhat abated. Thence we went a little way round the base, and found the path, if path it could be called, for it was nothing but a narrow irregular break in the rock, almost as perpendicular as the rock itself, and only more practicable on account of the steps formed in it by the broken layers of stone.

We soon passed this, and then walking along a narrow ledge formed in the precipice, we came to another natural stair of the same kind, which conducted us to the height of four or five hundred feet, where we scared two eagles (or I rather believe vultures) from the rock, which continued screaming and wheeling round our heads during great part of the ascent; and doubtless we had their best wishes for our speedy passage to the bottom.

Turning then in a degree away from the Marborée, we came to a piece of turf slanting in an extreme angle, and so slippery with the rain that we could scarcely keep our feet. We passed then again to the east, and once more, to my great satisfaction, began climbing the firm rock; but this did not last, and we had to change several times from rock to turf before I found myself at the summit of the amphitheatre, on a level with the top of the cascade, which, as the clouds began to clear away, I could plainly perceive projected violently over the edge of the opposite precipice, losing itself in mist below.

It is seldom that one has an opportunity of looking down a perpendicular height of fourteen hundred feet: and I stood enjoying the sensation much longer than I believe my guide judged *à propos*, for he seemed scarcely to know whether he ought to let me stand there or not. The tinkling of the sheep-bell, and a loud barking, two sounds I little expected to hear there, roused me from my dreaming, and conducted us towards the flock of a Spanish shepherd, which was wandering at large under the care of two enormous dogs, who now appeared mounted on the projecting rocks that flanked their charge, baying loudly at our approach.

No shepherd was with the flock, but we soon discovered his abode by a large iron pot of milk that stood at the entrance. He had chosen the little hollow under a shelf of the rock, and fenced it in with a wall of loose stones, which rose breast-high, forming a dwelling of about seven feet by four. I went up to the little wall and looked over upon the shepherd, who lay extended on his cloak reading. I asked him what he was about; and looking up without the least appearance of surprise, he answered that he was *studying*. I demanded what was the subject of his study, to which he replied by stretching out his arm towards me, with a dirty dog's-eared book of Spanish letters on geography. It is probable that the conversation might have lasted for some time in the same manner, he lying on his back, and I looking over the wall, had not Rondo come up and desired him to give us some milk. The call on his hospitality instantly roused him, and he sprang upon his feet, one of the most picturesque figures I ever beheld.

He was a youth of sixteen or seventeen, of very perfect, though almost gigantic proportions. Before he came out of his den, he placed his large broad-brimmed hat on his head, which gave a sort of bandit expression to his full dark eyes and sunburnt countenance. He wore two double-breasted Spanish jackets, covered with hanging buttons. His feet were shod with the sort of mountain sandal called *espardin*, and in a crimson sash round his waist he wore a sharp-pointed knife, nearly two feet long, which, though only used for the simple purpose of cutting his bread, might have served very well on more murderous occasions. In short, he was a most romantic sort of gentleman in appearance; but he speedily lighted a fire, boiled us a large portion of his milk, and pressed us to his simple treat with a cheerfulness and frankness smacking of ancient days. He joined with us too in conversation; told us that it was nearly a month since he had seen a human creature, and then it was his father, who had brought him six loaves of the black bread he sat before us.

The shepherd seemed anxious to know what brought us to the Brèche de Roland; and when I told him, in the best Spanish I could muster, that it was but simple curiosity, he shook his head with a smile. I asked

him why he did so, doubting whether he understood me; but he answered that he could not imagine any one coming to such a place unless it were to feed sheep.

One thing, however, he told us, which set our minds perfectly at ease with respect to the safety of our further progress. He assured us that there were no clouds on the other side of the breach, and that there would be no storm that day. My guide seemed to place perfect confidence in his judgment, and with this prognostic we again set out.

After about half an hour's more climbing, the clouds entirely cleared away, the wind blew strongly, the sun shone glittering on the snow before us, and all announced as fine a day as we could have desired. The mountain was all shining as if strewed with diamonds, for the last drops of rain were crowded upon every blade of grass, and nested in the bosom of every flower. Nature, as if to mock the snows, had covered the whole turf to their very edge with blossoms, and the rich blue iris, and a very delicate white flower I had never seen before, were actually growing within the verge of the region of frost. As most of these had already passed in the valleys, I gathered as many as I could for Madame de Gontaut; and then having fixed our *crampons*, which were but clumsy, we proceeded to climb the ice.

To the east was an immense glacier stretching over the highest part of the Marborée. It was of deep blue ice, and I could distinguish layer above layer, resting nearly vertically, which prevented all approach on that side. Stretching east and west was the rocky wall which forms the highest crest of the Pyrenees, and due south, cleft through as with a sword, the Brèche de Roland; but between us and it lay another glacier, at an inclination of about sixty degrees, which made the direct ascent impracticable. To the westward, however, was a large tract of soft snow, by which we were enabled to make our way to the side of the latter glacier, and cross instead of attempting to climb it. We proceeded very well up the snow for about a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time we came to ice covered with drift, and rendered unsound by the percolation of a stream.

Here the *crampon* on my left foot turned round, by the strap coming undone, and my foot gave way, but I was still firmly fixed by my climbing-pole and my right foot.

However, Rondo, who was about twenty yards distant, was alarmed and ran to my assistance, when both his feet slipped and he went flying like lightning towards the edge of the precipice. I could do nothing to save him: when suddenly, after having gone about two hundred yards, he struck his pole into the deep ice, and having regained his feet, returned to me as quietly as if nothing had happened.

We now began to cross the glacier transversely, cutting steps with a hatchet, and after passing more than one deep chasm from six inches to two feet in breadth, we arrived at the crest of the mountain, so that I could stretch out my hand and touch it. Between France and Spain this natural barrier rises perpendicularly from the ice, and is said to be from three to six hundred feet in height.

It has an extraordinary effect to stand upon those immense masses of ice, and feel the vivid rays of the summer sun. The rarefaction of the air did not at all affect my breathing; but the humidity had become so condensed under the glass of my pocket-compass, that I could scarcely ascertain the direction of the various objects. Retracing in a degree our steps, we now without further difficulty reached the *Brèche de Roland*; and here, for the first time, I turned round to contemplate the scene below.

Mountain beyond mountain, valley leading into valley, stream flowing into stream, till the fading distance and the boundless sky did not meet, but blended in each other. On one side were the whole mountains of Bearn, on the other the whole mountains of Aragon, far, and clear, and blue. It seemed as if a giant ocean of enormous waves had suddenly been frozen, and that I stood upon their highest pinnacle.

The icy barrier around appeared to cut us off from all nature. It was perfect solitude; there was not a flower, there was not a living creature; the very eagles we had left below: there was not a sound but that of the lonely wind whistling shrilly through the chasm in the mountain. Where we stood, we seemed far above creation, and at our feet lay all the vast and varied world, nor had I ever fancied that world so grand.

How magnificent are all thy works, great God of Nature!

THE DISCOVERY.

IN coming from the mountain, while I was yet far above the surface of the vulgar earth, I saw my friend standing, watching my descent, upon one of the hills of ashingle which lie at the bottom of Gavarnie, and I hastened on to meet him. There was some degree of agitation in his manner as we met, and as he grasped my hand he said, "Do you know, Young, something very extraordinary has happened to me since you have been gone."

"Something extraordinary it must have been, indeed," I replied, "to stir you from your calm placidity. But tell me, what is it?"

"Extraordinary indeed," he replied; "but come on towards the inn. Do you know I have seen the same appearance which has so long tormented you—I have seen again that terrible countenance which will never quit the memory of either of us!"

"Good God! is it possible?" I exclaimed; "then it is no delusion!"

"It is certainly the most extraordinary thing in the world," he replied; and then proceeded to inform me, that as he was coming down to breakfast, while looking along the dark passages at the top of the stairs, that fearful countenance had glared upon him for a moment in terrible distinctness. With prompt presence of mind he had instantly rushed towards it, but found nothing but the long corridors and empty rooms of the inn. On our return we called for the book of travellers' names, but our own were the only English names that it contained; and, not a little agitated, we mounted our horses and returned to St. Sauveur.

Without pausing any longer there than was merely necessary to pack the carriage, we set out for Bagnères de Bigorre, and thence proceeded towards Tarbes. More than once we canvassed the extraordinary circumstance that had occurred; and notwithstanding all our efforts to be philosophical, it is in vain to deny that I at least felt a greater degree of superstitious awe in re-

gard to the object which had so often tortured me, than ever I had done before. Previously I had looked upon it as a delusion, originating in a partial derangement of my own brain; but now that my friend had seen it also, it acquired the importance of a terrible reality. Every hour it weighed more and more upon my mind, and I saw that B—— was sorry that on the impulse of the moment he had communicated to me the fact of his having witnessed the same strange occurrence.

As we had set out somewhat late from Bagneres, however, the shadows were coming over the mountains long before we reached Tarbes, and as my friend B—— was rather indisposed, we determined, if the little town of St. Martin afforded a good inn, to halt there for the night. Our postillion informed us that the inn was "*admirable*;" and driving up to the door, we saw a crowd round it sufficient to show that it was well frequented.

There were, among others, five or six gendarmes on horseback surrounding a little cart, in which appeared a man loaded with irons, with another police soldier beside him. What was my surprise, however, on beholding, when the cart turned to drive off, no other than my former servant Essex in the person of the apparent criminal. The man evidently saw me, and turned away his head; and as I had but slight grounds to love his acquaintance, I took no farther notice, merely thinking, "The rascal seems likely at length to meet his deserts."

As B—— stepped out of the carriage, however, and walked into the inn, the landlord asked him if Monsieur had come to see the body of the gentleman who had been murdered. He replied by asking what gentleman; and, while the host answered that there was then lying in his front room the body of a gentleman who had been murdered by his own servant as he was coming from a chateau in the neighbourhood, where he had been to pay a visit, B—— walked on to the door where, from the number of people, and the appearance of one or two gendarmes, it seemed the corpse lay for inspection.

The crowd made room for him to pass, and I was following, but he suddenly drew back and grasped my arm, exclaiming, "Good God! Young, do not come in here—and yet do! It is Wild!"

"Wild!" exclaimed I, rushing in; "what do you mean?" But there needed no farther question. There, on the deal board, which usually served the little *auberge* for a public table, lay stretched the body of my enemy Alfred Wild, at least if mortal eyes might be trusted. My hand, it is true, had stretched him on the earth, my eyes had witnessed the convulsive agony of death, the surgeon had pronounced him to be dead, and the newspapers had announced his death; yet there he lay, or some one so like him that his own father would not have known the difference.

"Do you recognise the body, sir?" demanded one of the gendarmes, seeing me gazing upon it with feelings which no pen can describe, so mingled were they of hope and relief, and horror and surprise. "Do you recognise the body? for, in all the letters and papers which have been found upon him, he is called by one name which I do not choose to mention at present, while that in his passport is Monsieur Auguste de Valençay."

"I think I do recognise the body," I replied; "and, if it be the same, his name is not Valençay, but Alfred Wild."

"Précisément!" replied the gendarme; "that is the name on several letters which were found in his pockets. But we are going to send to the gentleman at the chateau, whom some people believe to be his father."

"Come away, Young," cried my friend; "this will be, at all events, a relief to your mind, and I trust may be but one step to your happiness. Come away; perhaps I had better go, before the horses are taken off, and break this event to the unhappy man's father."

"No!" I answered; "No; you are unwell yourself: I will go, and perhaps the task, painful as it is, may be some atonement for what I inflicted on the old man before."

B—— made some opposition, but I would yield to none; and, getting into the carriage, begged the people round to direct the postillion to the chateau they had mentioned. The man knew it well, and in about three quarters of an hour we were passing through a pair of old gray stone gates.

It was now quite dark, and the man, half peasant, half footman, who, after ringing five or six times, made his appearance, admitted me with somewhat surly scru-

tiny to a large vestibule, in which was burning one small ill-trimmed lamp. He then opened a door at one side, and announced, "The English gentleman," upon which a voice immediately exclaimed, "If he had not the impudence of the devil, he would not show his face here again—but I will soon settle that! Send him in!"

"Some mistake!" I thought, obeying the words I had overheard rather than the servant's half-muttered directions, and walked into a large old-fashioned saloon, somewhat better lighted than the hall. At the farther end was a table covered with the materials for making tea, and at the left-hand side sat two persons, on whom my eyes were of course instantly fixed. But before a vague sort of intuition could become really perceptive, a cry of joy met my ear, and, in a moment, Emily Somers, my own Emily, was in my arms. "It is James, papa! Oh, it is our own dear James!" she cried, and the happy tears flowed fast and long.

There was no mistaking the tone, the manner, or the action. Emily, at least, was glad to see me, and her father seemed so also, if I might judge by the hearty and reiterated shake of the hand which he now gave me. But how all this had come about remained to be explained, and it was but by confused and desultory fits and starts that I gained an insight into what I am now about to write down.

The first light which was thrown upon the matter was by Mr. Somers himself, who, when he found that I had come thither accidentally, supposing the tenants of the chateau to be very different people, cut across Emily's delight at seeing me, and withdrew her hand from mine.

"Stay, stay, Emily," he cried; "as Mr. Young does not know what has occurred, it is fit that he should be informed before he commits himself by a word. Remember, my love, his opinions may be altered as well as our fortunes."

"No, no, papa! No, no!" replied Emily. "For once, I will be bold and answer for him."

"But let me tell him at least," said Mr. Somers. "Soon after you left us for France, Mr. Young, one or two of my speculations were unsuccessful, and left me a loser of nearly fifty thousand pounds; but that was nothing, and would never have been felt, had not just afterward the great house of Kinnerton and Badenham,

in Calcutta, failed to an immense amount. That was a shock to many a house as well as mine, and people began to draw largely upon me ; still I could have done very well if the London house of the same name had held firm : but on calling there, though they assured me of their perfect competence to meet all claims, I saw cause to doubt. What could I do ? To press them was to make them stop sooner, without helping myself ; and, to prepare against the worst, I went to my old friend Samuel Wild, who talked about supporting me with half a million if it were necessary ; but when he came in the evening, he made it a condition that his son was to have my Emily.

" It was no time to trifle, and I told him all—her engagement to you—and every thing. But he replied, that his son could prove that you did not care any thing about her, and a great deal more which it is unnecessary to repeat. We held out for long ; writing to you, and receiving no answer, and seeing every now and then letters from your servant Essex to young Wild's valet, telling him a great many stories about you, which we have found to be false, as we have since passed through that part of the country, and seen many who knew you and did you justice.

" However, the matter seemed plain enough then. Difficulties increased ; the London house of K—— and B—— failed ; a regular run was made upon our bank. Old Wild stood firm, and would do nothing unless Emily would consent. I saw nothing before me but poverty and disgrace both for me and her, and I do believe I almost went on my knees to my own child to save us both. Well, sir, she did consent, and immediately Mr. Wild paid in, in one morning, three hundred thousand pounds. We declared our intention of paying every thing in gold ; the credit of the house rose higher than ever, when suddenly, who should come over but yourself. Your letter first opened my eyes : for, by showing me that you had been ill and unable to write for two months, and that your servant had been playing the rascal with you, you proved to me that I had been cheated also. Well, my dear boy, I went away to old Wild, resolving at all events to do you justice, let come what would ; and, producing your letter, I told him that his son must make good his charges, or I should not suffer Emily to keep her engagement. He then thought fit to bully.

and told me that before six-and-thirty hours were over he would close the doors of my bank. I feared that he had the power to do so, but still he could not take from me my honesty, and I left him in the same determination. The first thing was, if possible, to save my credit; and I went to several old friends, telling them the real state of the case, that I could meet all, but that it might require time. They promised to meet the next morning, and thus the day was spent without my seeing you.

"The next morning took place that unfortunate duel, and my friends also met; but ere they came to any decision, not only all that old Wild had paid in was drawn out of the bank, but every one with whom he had a word to say came pouring in with draught upon draught. There was no stemming the current, and before noon the bank stopped. You may conceive what a state we were all in, and then came the news that you had killed young Wild in a duel. Poor Emily was more dead than alive; and, to make matters worse, before nightfall there was an execution in the house. We went out of it the next morning, and, to cut my story short, when all the affairs were wound up, which did not take a couple of months, all debts were paid off, twenty shillings in the pound, and eight hundred per annum clear was left for myself. So I came out, my dear boy, triumphant; but still Emily begged me not to try it any more, but let us live upon what we have. We determined for a time to come to France. And now, James, if you love poor Emily Somers with little or nothing, as well as you loved the heiress of the rich banker, there she is, take her, and God's blessing be upon you both."

I need not say what was my reply, but it was soon made; and I now found that the letter which my friend B—— had written for me to Emily had never been received by her, the house in Portland Place having been taken possession of by Alfred Wild's father, who doubtless had opened and returned it. My stay at Worthing, and illness there, were known both to Emily and her father; and Mr. Somers, conceiving that I must have seen the wreck of his affairs mentioned in the newspapers, had himself requested my banker to tell me when he wrote that Emily and himself were as well as could

be expected, which had been done with true commercial brevity.

Alfred Wild, in the meantime, had been carried home to his father's house, but the report had already spread that he was dead; and from the moment that his father saw him in the condition in which he was brought home, the old man never spoke for any other purpose than to give orders for persecuting the family of Mr. Somers.

Great loss of blood, however, and excessive pain—for the ball had lodged in some very sensitive part—had made Alfred Wild faint upon the field at the moment he was about to fire at me; but he had suffered no mortal wound; and though he had fainted and recovered several times ere he reached his father's house, yet before night he was sufficiently recovered to know all that was passing round him. Enmity towards myself and love for Emily Somers were still the predominant passions of his heart; and, conceiving some vague scheme of obtaining her and punishing me, he besought his father to give out the story of his death.

He found the execution of the scheme more easy than he imagined, for the report was in all the newspapers that he had died on the spot where he fell; and his parsimonious father's only objection arose from the expense of putting the family in mourning and the trouble of concealment. When he heard, however, what was the object, and that revenge upon me and on the family of his former friend was thus to be obtained, a chord was struck in the old man's bosom, the tone of which was not the less powerful because it had seldom vibrated before. He declared that he would give a hundred thousand pounds—he might have said his heart's blood—to ruin me and the family of Mr. Somers, and measures were instantly taken to carry his son's design fully into effect. The death was regularly inserted in the newspapers, the whole house was shut up, the servants were clothed in black, and those necessarily trusted were bribed to secrecy.

I am not even sure that a false funeral was not performed; but nevertheless, rumours of something strange got about, even before Mr. Somers quitted London. Had I remained in England, I should most likely have discovered the deceit; for Captain Truro had positively declared in several circles that his friend

had not died immediately, as had been at first supposed; but, on the contrary, had revived once or twice in the carriage on their way home. No coroner's inquest being reported on the body also caused doubt, and the gratuitous announcement that the family did not intend to prosecute did not silence rumour.

As soon as he could travel, it seems, Alfred Wild, having re-engaged his confederate Essex in the scheme against me, set out from London for the purpose of following Emily, who, with her father, had taken refuge in a beautiful spot among the Pyrenees.

Whether it was with or without design—whether he had discovered the dreadful delusion with which remorse tortured me, and followed me with the fiendish purpose of confirming it—or whether his pursuing the same course was accidental—I cannot tell, but certain it is, that during the whole of my journey through France he had been near me, and I cannot even now be sure of which were the occasions when my fancy deceived me, which those when I beheld his real countenance.

Speaking French like a native, and having assumed a French name, he passed unsuspected, and at length presented himself at the chateau which had been hired by Mr. Somers, in order to throw off his disguise and pursue his claim to the hand of Emily.

Neither the worthy banker nor his daughter was much surprised by his reappearance; for, as I have said before, they had already learned to doubt the story of his death; but though he made his long constancy, the severe treatment he had suffered, and the vehemence of his passion, all pleas for Emily's hand, she rejected him still with cold abhorrence, and he left the house in not the best mood of mind. He had brought his servant Essex to the chateau with him to guide him, as the man had been previously sent forward from St. Sauveur to discover the house.

Master and servant, however, knew each other to be base, and many a disgraceful dispute had arisen between them already. As long as Essex had his master in some degree in his power, by possessing his secret, he knew that he could wring as much money from Wild as he wanted; but as soon as ever he found, by his master's visit to Mr. Somers, that the whole was to be divulged, he determined upon a scheme for

the purpose of at one blow taking vengeance of Wild for some former offences, and of enriching himself with the contents of a pocketbook which he knew to be valuable. The proximity of Spain was a great inducement for executing, at once, a design he had long meditated, for Essex was a citizen of the world, and with a well-furnished purse could make himself happy in any country. Thus, as they returned on horseback from the chateau, a few angry words from the master brought on a few insolent ones from the servant. Albert Wild, it seems, must have turned to reply, for he was found, not two minutes after, with the wound of a pistol-ball running from temple to temple. Essex was instantly pursued and taken by the *gardes chasses*, who came up at the report of fire-arms, and being found with his master's pocketbook and a lately-discharged pistol, perceived that he had lost the stake for which he had played, confessed all, and ended his life upon the scaffold.

I have hurried on to the conclusion of the history of Alfred Wild and his servant; but of course, when Emily and her father had given me an account of all that had befallen them up to the moment at which I had again found them after so long an absence, I too had my tale to tell. Though the first sketch was brief, yet the after details were long in telling, for Emily would know all and every thing; and while I spoke, the deep and varied emotions which crossed her countenance, the intense interest that every incident I related, every feeling I acknowledged, called up in the pure bland mirror of her face, was compensation a thousand and a thousand fold for all that I had suffered.

The pains, the cares, the sorrows of the past had taught us all that sad lesson, the darkest, most grievous which experience forces on us—ever present doubt of each future moment;—and it was agreed that Emily should become mine as speedily as possible. But alas! who can stretch his power over the next half hour and say, "It shall be at my disposal!" Our marriage was appointed to take place before the end of the month, and we were making preparations to hurry back to Bordeaux for that purpose. But Mr.

Somers was obliged to attend the criminal court at Tarbes on the trial of the prisoner Essex. The agitation and heat were more than he could bear, and after having given his evidence clearly and distinctly, he was seen to fall. I hastened to his assistance, and found that he had been suddenly struck with palsy. Borne back to his own house, medical aid was speedily procured, and he soon recovered the possession of all his faculties; but my marriage with Emily was of course delayed; and the physicians having recommended him to try the waters of Barèges for the complete restoration of his health, we removed thither, and remained till the close of the season. His health certainly improved in a degree, but still his corporeal powers were so much impaired, his danger so great, and his situation so painful, that all thought of more joyful events was of course put aside.

After our return from Barèges, a friend in whom he placed great reliance recommended him to a Parisian physician; and although we were obliged to wait for the return of spring, we proceeded towards the French metropolis as soon as the weather was sufficiently warm to permit of our performing the journey without danger to the invalid. It was accomplished by slow stages, and we arrived in Paris in the beginning of June. For a time the health of Mr. Somers seemed to improve under the new treatment to which he was subjected, and so far had he proceeded in his convalescence that my marriage with Emily was fixed to take place within a month. The unfortunate twenty-sixth of July, 1830, however, intervened, and the outbreaking of the last French revolution found us tied to Paris without the possibility of quitting a capital in which, during all former political convulsions, crimes of the deepest dye had been committed. My anxiety for Emily and Mr. Somers was of course very great, for no one had any right to expect that the French populace would show such noble and magnanimous forbearance as they then did, and the re-enactment of some, at least, of the horrors of former days was reasonably to be anticipated. When, however, the great struggle was over, and a revolution was effected which, by its splendid moderation and magnificent integrity of purpose and accomplishment, must be received as the atonement and expiation of the former bloody and insane catastrophe, Mr. Somers, over-

excited by the reports which we could not shut out from his ears, relapsed into a state worse than that from which he had partially recovered. In the meantime I applied myself as far as possible to relieve those individual cases of sorrow and distress which every great social convulsion must leave behind. In the course of my efforts for that purpose a little narrative of suffering fell into my hands, which may not be uninteresting—perhaps not uninteresting. It came to me through a third person, and the ultimate fate of the unhappy man who wrote it I could never discover. It was as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF A FRENCH ARTISAN DURING THE LAST REVOLUTION.

I was born in the beautiful valley of the Seine, near the small town of Bonnières. It is a lovely place, and I will say no more of it; for in sitting down to write all the miseries and horrors that have visited me since I left it, the fair calm spot of my birth, and the sweet peaceful scenes of my boyhood, rise up, like the reproachful spirit of a noble parent before a criminal son, and upbraid me for having ever quitted my tranquil home.

My father, though but the gardener at the chateau, was also a small *propriétaire*; and, in his spare time, used to cultivate his own fields by the banks of the river. The chateau had been purchased by Monsieur V—, the rich bookseller in Paris; and, in hanging about the house while a child, I became a great favourite with the good Parisian. Still my principal patron was Monsieur le Curé of Bonnières, who discovered in me an amazing genius for my catechism, taught me to read and write, gave me a smattering of Latin, and declared that, if I took pains and behaved well, he and Monsieur V— between them would procure me the means of studying, and make me a clergyman like himself.

My ambition was flattered with the prospect, and, during my early years, the dream of my future honours

was always before me; but as I grew up and learned to dance upon the green with the girls of the village, my sentiments insensibly changed. I began to think of leaving off dancing, and being grave, and serious, and never marrying—each with an augmented degree of horror. The decisive blow, however, was struck when I had seen three times Mariette Dupont. We were both as young as we well could be to fall in love; but she was so beautiful, and her soft dark eyes looked so impressively into one's heart, that, from the very first moment I saw her, I felt an inclination to put my arm round her and say, "Thou shalt be my own, and I will guard thee from sorrow, and care, and adversity, and shelter thee from every blast that blows in the bleak cold world around."

But on this I must not pause either, for the memory of such dreams is bitterness. The matter went on—I loved Mariette, and she—Ay! that joy is at least my own—lasting—imperishable, and the annihilation of a world could not take it from me—She loved me—deeply, truly, devotedly—through life—to the tomb!

Years flew by, and we were married—for my father had never liked the thought of my becoming a priest, which he looked upon as being buried alive. He said I should do much better to labour as my ancestors had done; or, since I had a superior education, could read and write, and understood Latin, I might easily make my fortune in Paris. So he willingly gave his consent to my marriage with Mariette. Monsieur V—, the bookseller, said it was always right to let fools have their own way; and the curé frowned and united us, merely observing that he had bestowed his time and attention very much in vain.

By my father's counsel, we determined to go to Paris immediately, for he and my brother were both sure that I should there become a great man, and Mariette had no doubt of it. "Besides," my father said, "if you do not get on there, you can come back here, and help to take care of our own ground while I work at the chateau."

To Paris we went, and took a small lodging in the Faubourg Poissonnier, where, for two or three weeks, Mariette and myself spent our time and our money in love and amusement. We were not extravagant, but we were thoughtless; and surely a three weeks' thought-

lessness was but a fair portion for such happiness as we enjoyed.

At length I began to think of seeking something to do; and I had sufficient self-confidence to fancy I could even write in a newspaper. Forth I went to propose myself; and Mariette's eyes told me how high were her anticipations of my success. To the proprietors of the *Constitutionnel* my first application was made; but the gentleman I saw bent his ear to catch my provincial jargon—looked at me from head to foot—told me I was dreaming; and turned upon his heel. How I got out of the house I know not; but when I found myself in the street, my head swam round, and my heart swelled with mingled indignation, shame, and disappointment.

It required no small effort to force myself to enter the office of another newspaper of much repute. Here I mentioned my pretensions in a humbler tone, and only proposed that something from my pen might be received as an experiment. The clerk to whom I spoke bore my message into an inner room, and returned with a calm, business-like face, to inform me that all departments were full.

This had occupied me the whole morning; and I now returned to Mariette, who instantly read my mortification in my countenance. She asked no questions, but only cast her arms round my neck, and with a smile which was not gay, though it was not desponding, she whispered, "Do not be vexed, Frank. They cannot know yet how clever you are. When they see more of you, they will be glad enough to have you. Besides, we can go back again to Bonnières."

The thought of returning unsuccessful to my own home was not what I could endure. I imagined the cold eye of the curate; and the disappointment and surprise of my father and brother; and the jeers and the wonder of the whole village; and I determined to do any thing rather than go back to Bonnières.

The landlord of our lodgings was a tinman, a great politician, and a literary man. All his information, however, was gathered from a paper called the *G—*, which he cited on every occasion. To the office of the *G—*, then, I went, after dinner; and having taken a couple of turns before the door to gather resolution, I went in, and modestly asked when I could see the edi-

tor? One of the young men in the office answered that Monsieur — was then in the house, and ushered me into another room. Here I found a gentleman writing, who looked up with a pleasant and intelligent expression, and pointing to a seat, asked my business.

As I explained it to him, his countenance took a look of great seriousness; and he replied, "I am extremely sorry that no such occupation as you desire can be afforded you by the editors of the G—, for we have applications every day, which we are obliged to reject, from writers of known excellence. I am afraid, also, that you will find much difficulty in obtaining what you seek, for one of the worst consequences of bad government is now affecting the whole of France. I mean the undue proportion between the number of the population and the quantity of employment. Where the fault lies I must not presume to say, but that there must be a great fault somewhere is evident: otherwise every man who is willing to labour would find occupation."

It has struck me since, that there must often be causes for want of employment which no government could either control or remedy; but, at the time, his reasoning seemed excellent; and all I felt was renewed disappointment, and a touch of despair, which I believe showed itself very plainly in my face, for the editor began to ask me some farther questions, which soon led me to tell him my precise situation.

He mused, and seemed interested; but for a moment replied nothing. At length, looking at me with a smile, he said, "Perhaps what I am about to propose to you may be very inferior to your expectations; nevertheless it will afford you some occupation."

The very name of occupation was renewed life, and I listened with eagerness, while he offered to recommend me to a printer as what is called a reader, or corrector of the press. I embraced his proposal with unutterable thankfulness; and having ascertained that I was capable of the task by some proof-sheets that lay upon the table, he wrote a note to Monsieur M—, the printer, and put it into my hand. I could almost have knelt and worshipped him, so great was the change from despair to hope.

With the letter in my hand I flew to the printing-house, was tried, and received; and though the en-
cru-

ment held out was as small as it well could be, my walk home was with the springing step of joy and independence; and my heart, as I pressed Mariette to my bosom, and told her of my success, was like that of a great general in the moment of victory, before the gloss of triumph has been tarnished by one regret for the gone, or one calculation for the future. I was soon installed in my new post; and though what I gained was barely enough for the necessities of life, yet it sufficed; and there was always a dear warm smile in the eyes I loved best, which cheered and supported me whenever I felt inclined to despond or give way.

It is true, I often regretted that I could not procure for Mariette those comforts and those luxuries which I little valued myself; but she seemed to heed them not, and every privation appeared to her a matter of pride—to be borne rather as a joy than a care. Six months thus passed, and they were the happiest of my life; for though I laboured, I laboured in the sunshine. I had perfectly sufficient time also to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the whole art of printing, and to fit myself for the task of a compositor, which, though more mechanical, was more lucrative; and it became necessary that I should gain more, as a change was coming over Mariette which promised us new cares and new happiness. Strange, that when I looked upon her languid features, and her altered shape, she seemed to me a thousand times more lovely than in all the fresh graces of expanding womanhood! And when fears for her safety mingled with the joy of possessing her—when her calm sweet eyes rested long and fixedly upon me, as if she strove to trace out the image of her future child in the looks of its father—a new and thrilling interest appeared to have grown up between us, which was something more than love.

At length, one of the compositors having gone to conduct a printing-office at Rennes, my object was accomplished, and I obtained his vacant place. Still the emoluments were infinitely small, for the book trade was bad, and of course the printers suffered. Sometimes there was plenty of work, and sometimes there was none; and the whole of my companions murmured highly at the government, whose imbecility and tyrannical conduct, they said, had destroyed the commerce of the country, and done every thing to ruin and degrade

the press. There was many a busy whisper among us that nothing could save the nation but a new revolution; and as we all felt more or less the sharp tooth of want, we madly thought that no change would be detrimental to us. I doubted some of the opinions that I heard; but one of my comrades worked at the *G—*, which had now become a daily paper, and he used often to give us long quotations, which convinced us all that the government was opposed to the wishes of the whole nation, and that any change must be for the better.

During the autumn I contrived to save some little portion of my wages; but the rigour of the winter, and the quantity of wood we were obliged to burn, soon consumed all that I had laid by; so that the provision for Mariette's confinement became a matter of serious and dreadful anxiety. One morning, however, I received a letter from my brother, telling me that my father had died suddenly on the preceding night. I will not rest upon all that I felt. I had always been the slave of my imagination; and it had been one of my favourite vanities to think how proud my father's heart would be to see me raise myself high in the world, and how comfortable I should be able to render his old age, when the smile of fortune should be turned upon me. But now he was dead, and those dreams all broken.

The little patch of ground which we possessed was of course divided between me and my brother; and my portion was instantly sold to provide for the occasion which was so near at hand. The depression of all property, and the haste with which I was obliged to effect the sale, rendered it the most disadvantageous that can be conceived; and what with the expenses of Mariette's confinement, a long illness which she underwent after, and a fit of sickness which I suffered myself—before the end of March my stock of money was reduced to fifty francs.

Work was by this time sufficient and regular, so that I could maintain myself, Mariette, and our boy. We had, indeed, no superfluity; we knew no luxury; and the external enjoyments which I saw many possessing, far less worthy than ourselves, were denied to us.

Mariette bore it all with cheerfulness, but I grew gloomy and discontented; and the continual murmurs at the government which I heard among my companions wrought upon me. I gradually began to dream that

every thing unpleasant in my situation was attributable to the state of society in which I lived. Every political change now seemed to irritate and affect me. Whereas, before I heard a word of politics, I used to work on with hope and activity, encountering hardships boldly, and feeling them the less because I did not let my mind rest upon them, I now dwelt upon every uncomfot, and magnified it in my own eyes, for the purpose of making it a greater reproach to the government, whose evil measures, I thought, caused it. I would pause long in my work to read scraps from a newspaper, and to comment on the folly and tyranny of our rulers; and thus I met several reproofs for my slowness and negligence.

The fires in Normandy I heard of with indignation and horror, and I attributed them all to the ministers, whose wickedness I thought was capable of any baseness, till one day I heard one of my more violent companions observe, that the incendiaries were very much in the right to burn down the barns and destroy the grain, as by making the great mass of the people as miserable and penniless as themselves, they would force them to bring about a revolution, which would set all things to rights. Besides, he asked, what right had a rich man to corn, when the poor were starving?

The elections for the chamber of deputies were another great source of anxiety to me; and when I found they were all liberal, I felt nearly as much satisfaction as if I had been elected myself. At length the meeting of the chambers approached; and many a warm discussion took place among the journeymen printers on the questions likely to be brought under consideration. Every one said that the ministers must go out, or dissolve the chambers; but many observed with a shrewd glance, that neither the dissolution of the chambers nor the resignation of the ministers would satisfy the people. "We must have a change," they said; "a complete change;" and several began to talk boldly of revolution.

The continual irritation and discontent I felt had their effect on my countenance; and Mariette grew anxious about me. She did all she could to sooth me—sat with her arms around my neck, and endeavoured to persuade me that I should be happier if I did not think of politics. "Kings and governments," she said, and said truly, "could only provide for the general

good; and that there must always be many in every country whose fate destined them to labour and live hard. She could not but think," she added, "that the way to be happy was for every one to try, by his own exertions, to improve his own condition; and neither to envy his neighbour nor to meddle with affairs in which he was not well practised."

She sought to induce me, too, to return to Bonnières. We had never been so happy since we left it; and so sweetly, so perseveringly did she urge a request which I saw was made for my sake more than her own, that at length I consented to go, and, quitting all the vain dreams which had led me to Paris, to reassume the class and occupation of my fathers.

We had not money to go by the diligence; but we were both good walkers; and the baby, being brought up by hand—and that upon the simplest food—would prove but little encumbrance.

This determination was taken on Sunday the 25th of July, and the next day I gave my employer notice that at the end of the month I should quit him. In the meantime we determined to save every sous that was possible, in order to provide for our expenses by the way; for which we had hitherto made no reserve.

On the Monday following I joined the rest of the printers, and we worked through the day in tranquillity. At night, however, as I was returning over the Pont Neuf, I met one of my companions, who grasped my hand, asking, with a look of intense eagerness, "If I had heard the news?" The suddenness of the question, and his look of anxiety, alarmed me. I knew not well what I dreaded, but, at all events, my fears were all personal. His tale soon relieved me of my apprehensions for Mariette and our child; but raised my indignation to the highest pitch against the government. The king, he told me, had violated the charter, struck at the liberty of the press, altered the law of election, and reduced the people to a nation of slaves.

Distant shouts met our ear as we were crossing the Rue St. Honoré; and hurrying on in the direction from which they proceeded, we came upon an immense multitude, who were breaking the lamps, and yelling execrations against the government.

I was well enough inclined to join them; but remembering Mariette, I returned home, and told her all that

occurred. As I spoke, a paleness came over her beautiful face, so unusual, so ghastly, that it made me start. It seemed as if some warning voice had told her that every happy dream was at an end—that the eternal barrier had fallen between us and joy for ever. The next morning every thing seemed to have passed by which had disturbed the tranquillity of the town on the previous evening—the streets were quiet, and the people engaged in their usual occupations. Mariette's mind appeared somewhat calmed; but still she looked at me anxiously, as she saw me about to depart, and made me promise more than once that I would go straight to my work, without mingling with any mob I might see.

I kept my word: and though I saw several groups of people gathering round the corners of the streets, where the obnoxious ordinances were posted up, I did not even stop to read, but hurried on to the printing-house with all speed. The scene in the work-rooms was different from any I had ever beheld. All the presses were standing still; and the workmen, gathered into knots, were each declaiming more violently than the other on the infamy and folly of the government; and, with furious gestures, vowing vengeance. The overseer came in soon after, and with some difficulty got us to our work; but about twelve o'clock, the proprietor of the establishment himself appeared, and told us to leave off our labours.

"My good friends," said he, "the government has annihilated the liberty of the press. The type of several of the journals has been seized this morning. Our liberties are at an end without we secure them by our own force. Far be it from me to counsel tumult or bloodshed—the law is quite sufficient to do us justice. However, I have determined, as well as Monsieur Didot and all the other printers, to cease business, and discharge my workmen." We were then paid the small sum owing to each, and dismissed, with a caution to be quiet and orderly, and to trust to the law; though the very fact of turning out a number of unemployed and discontented men upon such a city as Paris, seemed to me the very best possible way of producing that tumult which we were warned to avoid.

I soon after found that it was not alone the printers who had been discharged, but that almost all the work-

men in the city had been suddenly thrown out of employment. As I returned home, there was a sort of ominous silence about the town that had something fearful in it. Not ten persons were to be seen upon the Quais, which are usually so crowded; and it seemed as if the whole population had been concentrated on particular points.

To my great surprise, on entering my lodging, I found my brother sitting with Mariette, and holding our infant on his knee, while the child looked up in his face and smiled, as if it knew that those were kindred eyes which gazed upon it. My brother soon told me the occasion of his coming to Paris, which was to buy seeds and plants for the hothouse at the chateau; and about three o'clock, as every thing was quiet, I went out with him.

As we passed onward, we soon saw that all was not right. The shops were closed—the gates of the Palais Royal were shut—groups of gloomy faces were gathered at every corner—and the whole town wore the dull, heavy aspect of a thunder-cloud, before the storm bursts forth in all its fury. A few gendarmes were to be seen, but no extraordinary military force appeared; and gradually the same sort of yelling shouts came upon our ear that I had heard the night before.

As we approached the Rue St. Honoré, the cries became louder; and turning down the Rue des Bons Enfants, we found ourselves suddenly in the crowd from which they proceeded. It consisted of about five hundred men and boys, all unarmed. Some had stones in their hands, and some had sticks; but no more deadly weapons could I discern among them. A great proportion of the mob were discharged printers, and I was instantly recognised by several of my fellow-workmen, drawn into the crowd with my brother, who was very willing to go, and hurried on towards the Place Vendôme, whither the rioters were directing their steps, with the purpose of attacking the house of Monsieur de Peyronnet, one of the obnoxious ministers.

The numbers in the Rue St. Honoré were in no degree tremendous; but as we entered the Place Vendôme, I saw an equal body coming up the Rue Castiglione, and another approaching by the Rue de la Paix. A large force of mounted gendarmerie was drawn up in the square; and shortly after, a party of the guard

and the troops of the line appeared. There seemed to be considerable hesitation on both parts to strike the first blow; and as long as we kept to shouts, the military remained passive. What took place towards Peyronnet's house I could not discover, my view being obstructed by the heads of the people, but there seemed a considerable tumult in that direction; and a moment after, a lad beside me threw an immense brick at the head of the officer of gendarmerie, crying, "A bas le Roi! Vive la Charte!"

The missile took effect, knocked off the officer's hat, and covered his forehead with a stream of blood. That instant the word was given to charge; and in a moment we were driven down the Rue St. Honoré in confusion and terror. My brother could not run so fast as I could, and at the corner of the Palais Royal I found that he was left several yards behind, while the horses were close upon him. I instinctively started back to assist him, and seeing no other means, I seized a wine-cask that stood at one of the doors, and rolled it with all my strength between him and the soldiers. The nearest gendarme's horse stopped in full course, stumbled, and fell over the barrel. A loud shout of gratulation and triumph burst from the people; and turning in their flight, they discharged a shower of bricks and stones upon the advancing cavalry, which struck more than one horseman from his saddle, and afforded time for my brother and myself to join the rest, which we did amid great cheering and applause, as the first who had actually resisted the military. Elated by the cheer, my brother entered with enthusiasm into the feelings of the multitude, while I felt as if I had committed a crime, in injuring men who were but doing their duty.

A temporary cessation of hostility now occurred between the people and the soldiery. The gendarmerie established themselves in the Place du Palais Royal, some troops of the line took possession of the Rue St. Honoré, and the mob occupied the end of the Rue de Richelieu, and the corners of the Rue Montpensier, where the new and incomplete buildings afforded plenty of loose stones, which were soon again used as missiles against the gendarmes. I would fain now have got away and returned home, but my brother would remain; and my companions, remembering the affair of

the barrel, put me forward as a kind of leader; so that vanity joined with enthusiasm to make me continue, while the thought of Mariette came from time to time across my memory with a thrill of dispiriting anxiety.

The next two hours passed all in tumult. The soldiers charged us several times, and we fled, but still returned to our position as they reassumed theirs. Many shots were fired, but few fell, and muskets, fowling-pieces, pistols, and swords began to appear among the crowd, while in one or two places I discerned the uniform of the National Guard, and two or three youths from the Polytechnic School. Darkness soon after this came on; the multitudes opposed to the soldiery were increasing every minute, and a cry began to run through the crowd, "To the gunsmiths' shops! To the gunsmiths' shops!"

Instantly this suggestion was obeyed. We dispersed in a moment. Every gunsmith's shop in the neighbourhood was broken open, and almost before I was aware, I was armed with a double-barrelled gun and a brace of pistols, and provided with powder and ball. The shop from which these instruments of slaughter were procured was one at the end of the Rue de Vivienne, and as I came out I paused to consider which way I should now turn.

"Let us go to the Corps de Garde near the Exchange," cried one of the men who had been near me all the day. "Lead on, *mon brave*," he continued, laying his hand upon my shoulder, "*you* shall be our captain." I looked round for my brother, but he was no longer there, and I followed the man's suggestion. As we went, by the advice of one of the Polytechnic School, we put out all the lamps, and spread the cry everywhere to do the same.

It was now quite dark, and our number increased at every step as we advanced. Opposite the Corps de Garde, at the Bourse, a small body of soldiers were drawn up, and two or three torches were lighted. A warning to stand off! was given, as soon as the troops heard our approach, and as we still advanced, increasing our pace, a volley instantly followed. A ball whistled close by my ear and made me start, but still I rushed on; and the soldiers, seeing the multitude by which they were attacked, attempted to retreat into the guardhouse.

We were upon them, however, before the doors could be closed, and a terrific struggle took place, man to man. One strong fellow closed with me, and the strife between us soon grew for life. Our feet slipped, and we fell together, rolling over and over, wrapped, with a sort of convulsive fold, in each other's arms. All thought was out of the question; but suddenly getting one of my hands free, I brought the muzzle of a pistol close to my opponent's head, and fired. For an instant his fingers pressed more tightly round my throat—then every muscle was in a moment relaxed, and as I sprang up he rolled backward on the pavement.

The fury of excitement was now upon me; and hearing some shots still ringing within the guardhouse, I was rushing towards it, when I perceived the multitude pouring forth, and a thick smoke, with some flashes of flame, streaming from the windows. The guardhouse was on fire, and in an instant the whole sky was in a blaze. I stood to look at it, for a moment, as the fire-light flashed and flickered upon the dark and demon-like figures that surrounded the pile, and on the various dead bodies that lay in the open space the people had left, as in awe, between them and the destruction they had wrought. It was a fearful sight—sweet memories of peace and home rushed upon my brain. I shuddered at my own deeds, and turning from the whole vision of excited passion before my eyes, I ran as hard as I could to reach my home.

O never did I feel the thought of returning to the secure arms of her I loved so exquisite as at that moment! and I flew up the stairs rather than ran. I opened the door and entered; Mariette was kneeling by the cradle of our child. She did not hear me come in. I pronounced her name. At first she made no reply; but then turned round with a face that will haunt me to the grave, and pointed to the cradle. I sprang forward and looked. There were traces of blood and bloody bandages strewed about, and round the poor infant's white and delicate shoulder were the compresses and dressings of a fresh wound.

"Good God, Mariette!" I exclaimed, "how is this? How?"

"I heard firing in the streets," she answered, with an awful degree of calmness; "I feared for my husband—ran out to see; and, not daring to leave it all alone,

I took my child to death. I had scarcely gone a yard when a shot struck it in my arms."

Through the whole of that dreadful night Mariette and I sat by the cradle of our dying child—silent as the grave, with our eyes fixed upon its pale and ashy countenance, and hardly daring to lift our looks towards each other. From time to time it gave a faint and torturing cry, but in general seemed in a panting sort of sleep, till towards four in the morning, when the breathing stopped, and I know not what gray shadow fell over its calm sweet face. I did not think it was dead; but Mariette threw her arms round my neck, and hid her eyes upon my bosom.

It was nearly midday on the Wednesday when one of my companions came to tell me that the man who, it was reported, had been seen with me the day before, had been killed by a shot on the Boulevards, and I hastened after the messenger to ascertain the truth, for my brother had not yet reappeared. He led me to the door of the Exchange, over which the tri-coloured flag was now flying in triumph; but on each side of the gate was stretched a dead corpse, and the first I saw was indeed my brother. Rage and revenge took possession of my whole heart. I joined the brave men who were marching down to the Place de Grève; and from that moment I entered into every act of the revolution with all the enthusiaam, the zeal, the fury of the rest.

It is needless to detail every scene I witnessed, and every struggle in which I shared. Suffice it, I was in most of those that occurred—at the taking and retaking of the Hôtel de Ville—at the storming of the Louvre, and at the capture of the Tuileries. The enthusiasm among us was immense and overpowering; and the moderation and heroism with which it was conducted reconciled me fully to the revolution. From time to time I ran home to sooth and console my poor Mariette, and to snatch a mouthful of bread, for our purse was now so low that we did not dare to purchase any thing else. Mariette ate little while I was there, but she assured me that she had plenty, and that she generally took something while I was gone in the middle of the day. Grief and anxiety had worn her sadly; the lustre had quitted her eye, and the rose had left her cheek: and she looked at me so sadly, so painfully, as I went away, that every time I determined it should be the last.

At length the royal troops were beaten out of Paris, and the palace where monarchs had revelled fell into the hands of the people. A few of the national guard and a few of the common people were selected, as to a post of high honour, to guard the Tuileries during the night, under the command of a student of the Polytechnic School. I was one of those fixed upon; and having sent, by a comrade, a message to Mariette, which he forgot to deliver, I remained for the night in those scenes of ancient splendour. There was something awfully melancholy in the solitary palace, and a feeling of compassion for the dethroned king grew over my heart as I sat in the midst of the magnificent halls that he might never see again. As soon as we were relieved the next morning I flew to Mariette. She had passed a night of the most dreadful anxiety, my comrade having, as I have said, never delivered my message. Her eye was hollow, and her cheek was sunk, but all seemed forgotten when she beheld me safe; and, seeing me fatigued and faint, she made me eat some bread and drink a glass of water, almost weeping that she had not something better to give me.

As the last bit touched my lip, a vague thought struck me that she had none herself, and I insisted on her telling me. She cast her arms around me, and assured me, with a smile, that it did her more good to see me eat than to take any thing herself; but I at length drew from her that all our money was expended, and that she had not tasted any thing for two days.

I thought I should have gone distracted; and after remaining for a few minutes, stupified as it were, I ran to the printing-house to see if I could get work, and induce the overseer to advance me a single franc to buy some bread for my poor Mariette.

The office, however, was shut up, and I knocked in vain for admittance. I then turned to the lodging of one of my fellow-printers, who might lend me, I thought, even a few sous. I hurried up the narrow dirty staircase where he lived, and went into his room; but the sight I saw soon convinced me he wanted assistance as much as I did. He was sitting at an uncovered table, with five children of different ages about him. His cheek was wan and hollow; and as I entered he fixed his haggard eye upon the door, while his little girl kept pulling him importunately by

the arm, crying, "Give me a piece, papa—I will have a piece of bread."—"Lend me a franc," cried he, as soon as he saw me; "my children are starving—I will pay you when I get work."

I told him my own condition; but he burst forth in the midst, as if seized with a sudden phrensy, trembling with passion, and his eye glaring like that of a wild beast. "You are one of the revolutionists too. God's curse and mine upon you! See what your revolutions have brought! My children are starving—every artisan in Paris is beggared and unemployed. I am starving—my wife is dying for want of medicines in that bed—all these dear infants are famished; and all by your cursed revolutions! Out of my sight! be-gone! for fear I commit a murder!"

With a heart nearly breaking I returned home, and folding my poor Mariette in my arms, I gave way to tears, such as had never stained my cheeks before. She tried to sooth me—and smiled—and told me that really she was not hungry—that she did not think she could eat if she had any thing: but oh! I could not deceive myself. I saw famine on her cheek, and heard faintness in her tone; and after a long fit of thought, I determined to go to Monsieur V——, the great bookseller, who had been so kind to me while a boy. I told Mariette my errand, and as Paris was now nearly as quiet as ever, she willingly let me go.

It was a long way, and I had to cross the whole city, so that it was late when I arrived. Even then I found that Monsieur V—— was out; but the servant told me I could see him the following morning at nine. With this cold news I was forced to return; and no one can conceive what a miserable night I spent, thinking that every hour was an hour of starvation to the dear creature by my side. She lay very still, but she slept not at all, and I felt sure that the want of rest must wear her as much as hunger.

When I rose she seemed rather sleepy, and said she would remain in bed and try for some repose, as she had not closed her eyes since Monday. It was too early to go to Monsieur V——, so I hurried first to the printing-office, for I hoped that the tranquillity which was now returning might have caused Monsieur M—— to resume his usual business. I only found the porter, who told me that there was no chance of the house

opening again for weeks at least, if not months; and with a chilled heart I proceeded to the house of Monsieur V——.

Admission was instantly granted me, and I found the great bookseller sitting at a table with some written papers before him, on which he was gazing with an eye from which the spirit seemed withdrawn to rest upon some deep-absorbing contemplation within. He was much changed since I had seen him, and there were in his appearance those indescribable traces of wearing care, which often stamp in legible characters on the countenance the misfortunes which man would fain hide from all the world. There was a certain negligence, too, in his dress, which struck me; but, as he received me kindly, I told him all my sorrows and all my wants.

As I spoke, his eyes fixed upon me with a look of painful and intense interest; and when I had done, he rose, closed the door, and took a turn or two thoughtfully in the room. "What has ruined you," said he at length, pausing before me and speaking abruptly, "has ruined me. The revolution we have just passed through has been great and glorious in its character, and all the world must look upon it with admiration; but it has made you and me, with hundreds, nay, thousands of others—beggars—ay, utter beggars. It is ever the case with revolutions. Confidence is at an end throughout the country, and commerce receives a blow that takes her centuries to recover. The merchant becomes a bankrupt—the artisan starves. I have now seen two revolutions, one bloody and extravagant, the other generous and moderate, and I do not believe that, at the end of either of them, there was one man in all France who could lay his hand upon his heart and say that he was happier for their occurrence; while millions in want and poverty, and millions in mourning and tears, cursed the day that ever infected them with the spirit of change.

"To tell you all in one word: within an hour from this time I am a bankrupt, and I am only one of the first out of thousands. Those thousands employ each thousands of workmen, and thus the bread of millions is snatched from their mouths. I do not say that revolutions are always wrong; but I do say that they always bring a load of misery, especially to the laborious and

working classes—and now leave me, good youth. There is a five-franc piece for you. It is all I can give you, and that, in fact, I steal from my creditors. I pity you from my soul, and the more, perhaps, because I feel that I need pity myself.”

The five-franc piece he gave me I took with gratitude and ecstasy. To me it was a fortune, for it was enough to save my Mariette. I hastened home with steps of light, only pausing to buy a loaf and a bottle of wine. I ran up stairs—I opened the door. Mariette had not risen. She slept, I thought—I approached quietly to the bed. All was still—too still. A faintness came over my heart, and it was a moment or two before I could ascertain the cause of the breathless calm that hung over the chamber. I drew back the curtain, and the bright summer sunshine streamed in upon the cold—dead—marble cheek of all that to me had been beautiful and beloved!

When the extraordinary heat of the weather, which, during the whole of July, was extremely oppressive, had somewhat subsided, a slight change for the better took place in our invalid; and our hopes of a permanent amendment of his health began to revive. One night, however, after Emily and myself had been gazing from the balcony of the hotel over the gardens of the Tuileries, and watching star after star come out in the deepening sky, we turned back into the room, and, sitting down at her writing-desk, I wrote upon a scrap of paper some of the feelings with which the night always filled my heart, and which fell without an effort into verse.

THE NIGHT.

The night—the night—the solemn night !
 The silent time of thought ;
 The kingdom of the pale moonlight
 And mem'ry, when things gone and bright
 Are back to mortals brought.

The night—the night—the brilliant night
 Clothed in her starry robe :
 When sweet to Hope's ecstatic sight,
 Come future dreams that day's hard light
 Had banished from the globe.

The night—the night—the peaceful night !

The pause, when each calm joy,
Which Time, that oft unpitying wight,
Has spared or granted in his flight,
Is known without alloy.

The night—the night—how dear the night !

Since now its dreams are sweet ;
Since Hope and Love have made it bright,
And changing darkness into light,
Have bade its shadows fleet.

“Take another sheet of paper, my dear boy,” said Mr. Somers, when he saw that I had done, “and be kind enough to write a note for me.” I did as he requested, when, to the surprise of Emily and myself, he dictated a letter to the chaplain of the embassy, expressing his wish that he would perform the marriage ceremony between his daughter and myself on the morning of the Thursday following. It was then Tuesday, and a few words of astonishment rather than opposition broke from Emily’s lips ; but he added at once, “Let it be so, my dear child ! It is your father’s particular request.”

Emily said no more, but hid her eyes for a moment on his bosom, and the note was despatched. With the greatest possible privacy the ceremony was performed, and Mr. Somers, who had made an effort to be present, was lifted into the carriage, and proceeded with us to a house we had taken for the time, in the Val de Montmorency. The next day he appeared greatly better ; but at night, about half an hour after he had left us, his servant came suddenly to call us ; and, running to his room with Emily, we found him with the last breath of life hanging on his lips. All medical aid proved vain ; and when it was all over, Emily and I both felt that it must have been some presentiment of approaching fate that had caused him to hurry our marriage.

Emily has now been long my own, linked to me for life by that sweet indissoluble bond which no two hearts worthy of happiness ever wished less firm and permanent than it is. Changes may come over my destiny, misfortunes may fall upon me again, but I look calmly on to the future ; and fear not that such sorrows will ever darken the autumn of my days as those which

frowned upon their spring, and which it has been my task to detail in the foregoing pages.*

* To guard against all mistakes, it may be as well to state, that all the tales, &c. which appear in the preceding pages, are the production of one author, whether they be placed in the mouths of various persons or not, with the single exception of that called a "Young Lady's Story," which occupies four pages, and is placed here principally to convince her that the efforts of her pen lose nothing by comparison with those of an old and practised writer.

It was my intention to have given a list of errata, which the reader will have perceived are exceedingly numerous in the preceding pages. Their numbers, indeed, prevent me from fulfilling that purpose; and I think it but fair to remark, that though at least one half of them may perhaps be attributable to the printers, the other half must rest upon my own shoulders, as nothing has so soporific an effect upon me as the reading of my own works; and the very dullest work of another will keep me awake, when two pages of what I consider my wittiest compositions will send me sound asleep. Heaven forbid that they should have the same effect upon others at any time but that at which "nature's sweet restorer" may be especially requisite to the refreshment of the mental or corporeal faculties of my readers.

THE END.



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